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THE ART OF
GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN



GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN

MARGARET



NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
681 FIFTH AVENUE



FREDERICK

THE ART OF GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN

EDITED BY

MARGARET CROSBY MUNN

AND

MARY R. CABOT

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

SIR JOHNSTON FORBES-ROBERTSON



NEW YORK

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

On February 10, 1907, George Munn, painter, passed over to the majority, and I, his fellow-student and lifelong friend, wish to set down, as best I may, a slight tribute to his personality and genius.

His was a rare spirit—a steadfast one—and always unfalteringly true to the highest standards of his art. No petty trafficking, or time-serving in his work, ever dimmed his soul. He had the rare courage to paint to please himself first, and the public and the buyer—well, they did not count!

In the year 1873 he passed those examinations which qualified him for studentship in sculpture at the Royal Academy, and I can see now the straight-backed young Ameri-

can setting up his clay in the antique school on his first day, a "new boy," and a stranger amongst us. His face was pale, his hair was dark and parted in the middle, a sort of outrage of the fashion of those days; big, sad and thoughtful eyes, a slight mustache, and wearing the clothes of a man of the large world; a strong contrast to us all, for Thackeray's art student of the velvet jacket and long hair lingered with us yet. Here was an object for the insolent patronage of the older students! But we were not to hold that hectoring attitude long, for we soon found that what the gracious American stranger said on art "went," and we hung on his words, uttered with a very slight but most engaging stammer.

He had come to us a gold medalist from the Kensington Art Schools, and soon took a silver medal for modeling at the R. A. Schools. Having passed into the Upper or Life Schools sooner than most of us, he

abandoned sculpture and took up painting with the greatest enthusiasm.

His fine sense of color was shown in his very first study. From that day on he gathered strength and won the golden opinions of all his brother students. Some of the great men were to come of us—Frank Dicksee, Alfred Gilbert, Waterhouse, Thornycroft, Waterton and Swan, all in after years to add R. A. to their laurels. Percy Macquoid, the archæologist and painter, was also one of us. What an audacious and dictatorial crowd we were, laying down the law—and pretty good law it was too—with all the world before us, and each and all convinced we were to be of the elect!

Not satisfied with what the Academy Schools could give him, Munn pursued his studies at Julien's and Munkacsy's studios in Paris and came back a ripe painter. Watts chanced to see a copy of one of his works

that Munn had made and said to a friend, "I must have that man work with me," and so it came about that Munn was in daily intercourse with that giant for many months and, amongst other things, he "laid in" all "The Triumph of Death" in distemper for the master to work on.

The young man's determination, enthusiasm, sincerity and reverence had won for him the highest possible training, and he became indeed armed and well prepared for the pursuit of the art he so dearly loved. His pictures, both landscapes and figures, were soon to be found in the leading London galleries; the Royal Academy, the Grosvenor Gallery, the British Artists, the New and the Dudley galleries. His landscapes, mostly painted in Brittany and Normandy, were of the highest order, and some indeed as fine as any that have ever been painted. He could draw a tree that would have satisfied even Ruskin,

and his sense of color and tone was pure and true and his style quite free from affectation. There was an original and individual quality which pervaded the whole of his work, combined with a great refinement and a great strength.

The painters, I should say, who influenced his work while a student, were Pelluse, Mason, Frederick Walker, and preëminently Watts. Had health permitted him to pursue his art, his name as a painter would have gone across the length and breadth of the lands.

Reverence for what is best in men and things is the lasting grace for the man who would pursue art; without it he must come to naught; this precious grace George Munn had to the fullest degree. The charm of his personality, his rare and abundant sense of humor, his just and upright mind, and all the higher qualities that go to make up a man made him beloved of all his fellow stu-

dents and all the men and women who had the good chance to come in touch with him. If a man was worth his salt Munn had that rare art of making that man "get a fine conceit o' himself," as it were, and so he was a helper, an encourager, an inspirer, a giver of those precious gifts that help the soul of a man, and that all the dollars on earth cannot buy.

Farewell, George Munn! To those who knew you, you are not passed away, for your high spirit of enthusiasm and truth remain with us for guidance and help always.

JOHNSTON FORBES-ROBERTSON.

GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

THE rare distinction of the genius and personality of George Frederick Munn lay in the extent to which the love of Beauty took possession of his whole being. In him the artist was not separated from the man. To every one who recognized the source of his power, he carried a message of pure joy. There was a vital strength and freshness of life, touched by imagination and humor, in his least expression of what is commonplace to most men, and his atmosphere held a sweetness, nobility and strength that were repeated in his face. The vision of Beauty was ever with him, transforming not only his achievement in his art, but ulti-

mately whatever for the moment seemed failure, into the very wine of life.

His story, falling on modern days of strife for material rewards, seems to miss its natural consummation unless it is open to every one in need of his illuminations, as were the riches of his heart and mind to those whom he companioned most closely during his life in this world.

No record of his life would be a true one that did not include the illness resulting from typhus fever which recurred from time to time during the last twenty-five years of his life; stopping his career as a painter and changing, during the period of its recurrence, his point of view and standards, so causing a misunderstanding of his true character and aims in the minds of all but those who knew him best and saw him through all the changes of his life and circumstances. But it is not the purpose of this record to dwell on the misunderstandings and compli-

cations resulting from an illness, which to a man of his power was a tragic misfortune; but rather to attempt to show the man as he was before his illness and also in later years, of comparatively normal health, when through a native strength of character he won a triumph of spirit over conditions which would have at the outset bereft most men of either the hope or power to cope with the world on any terms.

He was born August 21, 1851, in Rutgers Place, Utica, New York, where his parents had gone to make a home among old friends, after a residence of ten years in Memphis, Nashville, and other cities of Tennessee and Virginia. His father, John Munn, was engaged for many years in establishing banks in Southern States, and the fortune made by him during these years bears witness to his energy and sagacity in practical affairs. He was a New Englander by birth, and of the English-Puritan stock that braved the

hardships and peril of Indian warfare along the Connecticut River in the earliest days.

More than one of the name of Munn offered up their lives in the wilderness to bring civilization to western Massachusetts. The father of John Munn, Calvin Munn of Greenfield, Massachusetts, entered the patriot army at the age of sixteen and served six years until the close of the Revolution. He was at Saratoga at the surrender of Burgoyne, in action at Yorktown, and one of the boat's crew that captured a gunboat on which one hundred and thirty British were killed and eleven made prisoners. He was Lieutenant under General Lafayette and with General Sullivan when he evacuated Long Island. At the battle of Jamestown he was under the command of "Mad" Anthony Wayne. During Shays's Rebellion he appeared again in the service of his country, and was in Springfield, Massachusetts, at the time of the attack on the United States Ar-

senal. His fervid patriotism was ever armed with courage and endurance. A monument marks his grave in Greenfield, Massachusetts, and is yearly dressed with flowers by the citizens of his native town.

There is a reference in one of George Munn's letters to "the trustworthiness of his family in all branches, French and English and Scotch."

His father, John Munn, married a Southerner, Mary Jane Buchanan Meek, whose great personal beauty was enhanced by buoyant health and spirits. The blending of these two natures may hold some significance as to George's inheritance, for his temperament seems to have been a compound of tropical intensity of emotion, with the keen, active mentality we associate with Northern origins. John Munn was a man of broad and cultivated tastes. Much of his early life was passed in the home of Mrs. Sigourney, whose influence doubtless developed in him

the idealistic inclinations which were as notable as those that seemed more practical. A clear conviction that the welfare and happiness of mankind depend on the recognition of Beauty as the supreme test of human endeavor, led him to make the study of Art an essential part of the education of his children. He compelled their acquaintance with the Art-treasures of the world, without reference to their natural tendencies. The love of perfection in this remarkable man was rooted in the soil of large and humane instincts. Sometime before he left the South he freed his slaves and later, when he went North, took with him his faithful house-servant. A portrait of him in bas-relief, by the sculptor Calverley, shows a massive head with noble features; the whole face expressing heart, sensitiveness and strength.

Of his father, Munn wrote in later life to a wise physician: "You have writ-

ten me exactly such a letter as the finest man I have ever known used to write me, and that man could be no other than my deeply beloved father and I cannot pay you a more delicate or a more noble tribute." Again writing of his recollections of his father and mother, he said: "They are all delightful, and even the corrections I no doubt merited have become precious and have remained with me like a rich man's heirlooms ever since."

Utica was a town of solid and conservative people under the political leadership of men like Senator Conkling, Senator Kernan and Governor Seymour. Munn wondered at "the strange love of politics" that prevailed there. In Utica and later, in other neighborhoods, the intimate associations of the family were with men of virile life and robust humor. His sister, Mrs. Garret Pier, says that "as a very little boy, George was beautiful in the grand manner, having a

noble head and a wide-eyed, almost inspired expression in his large dark eyes, which I believe were the true outlook for his high spirit."

At an early age Munn laid the foundation for a deep and permanent friendship with the family of the great naturalist Audubon. Miss Eliza Audubon writes: "He came to our home in Audubon Park, a young boy, in 1865—into our household of children, older and younger, and from that date was like a son and brother.

"That he was a remarkable boy in many respects, there is no need for me to say: that he even then evinced the qualities for which we, and later the world, loved him so much, is not strange; but that a lad of his age should possess certain attributes of dignity, self-control, a peculiar reticence and an unusually high sense of honor, such as few persons even of ripe years

can boast of, is a thing to remember with fond pride and pleasure. Not that he lacked the joy of healthy youth: far from it: he was usually ready for fun and frolic with those who loved and understood him. But he was very discriminating in his choice of associates: his temperament was an exceedingly sensitive one: and there were hours, and even days when the eyes of affection saw that his mood was not a light one: and the love that was tender as a mother's and a sister's never allowed these moods to be trifled with: nor indeed would any of that warm-hearted circle have wished to do so."

His early efforts to adjust himself to the demands of a conventional training are best narrated in his own words:

"I have been terribly weighed down by my appalling lack of technical education. My dear father would gladly have sent me to a college or university, but my stammering habit robbed me of that privilege. The sad-

dest memories of my childhood, still vivid, are those connected with my difficult speech. When I reached the talkative age I found that I possessed a set of weak nerves of speech and that they prevented free utterance of my wishes. Easy converse, even with my playfellows, was almost an impossibility. But as I grew and the desire to talk developed with my strength, I found my answers to what was said were rather wiser than might have been expected of a little boy, for the reason that I could not answer at once, and so the chance was given me not only to think twice before speaking, but sometimes ten times twice. Then this affliction prevented me from reciting lessons in class at school, and free intercourse with even those who did *not* inspire me with awe or fear! I could not ask my way of a policeman without hesitation or communicate my wishes to a shopkeeper, and so I grew up a rather lonely boy, and was not much of a

reader, a natural refuge, one would think."

But this enforced habit of silence bore fruit in his increased capacity as a listener when occasion offered him "the unrestricted flow of talk from a host of men and women who had won distinction in the professions in England, France and Italy and America."

His education was to come, not from the secondary mediums of schools and books, but from direct contact with the vital Sources of Life and Art.

In September 14, 1865, Mr. and Mrs. Munn with three of their four children, Mary, Sarah, and George, the youngest, sailed for Europe. He was only thirteen years of age, but alive to those first impressions that shape the standard of a lifetime. Of this period his sister, Mrs. Pier, says:

"There had been no indication of any special trend towards the life of an artist, before this time, but these two years seem to have been an epoch in his career, a beginning, and

the museums proved a forcing-bed for his genius. He frequented the museums of Naples and Rome, and made friends of the Italian artists engaged in copying the classic marbles. They were but humble men, but their kindly converse and interest were perhaps the first round of the ladder to this young, striving soul. One of these simple men was a young lava, or cameo-cutter of Naples, named Stella,—another was an old Roman copyist or marble-worker, Conti. Under their directions he modeled bits of clay into copies of the heads from the bas-reliefs on Roman sarcophagi, etc.,—very stumbling little efforts, straws merely, blown by the wind of his destiny, but intimations of the irresistible force of that wind and the tendency of his nature."

Among his papers are many lists of objects of peculiar interest during this period; objects of beauty in Nature and in the world of Art that communicated to him "the thrill

divine." Mention is made by him of visits to the studios of W. W. Story in Rome and Hiram Powers in Florence; of Strauss music heard in Vienna, and music in Munich under the leadership of Joseph Gungl; of the galleries of Munich; of Oberammergau, and of bouquets thrown to the Emperor and Bismarck and impressions of the Court and aristocratic women.

In 1867 they went to Paris and were present at the opening of the Exposition by Napoleon III, who was accompanied on this occasion by the Empress Eugenie and the ill-fated Prince Imperial. George was deeply stirred at the sight of the Arts on exhibition and enjoyed the street scenes.

From Paris in the same year they journeyed to London and returned to America. He was then sent to the Ledoux School at Cornwall-on-Hudson, where his record appears to have been made on lava-cutting and on being expelled with

three of the oldest boys for giving money to help a little boy run away, who had, they believed, been unjustly treated by one of the teachers. His father was indignant that Mr. Ledoux had no other resource in the way of punishment except expulsion. This was the end of George's technical schooling.

The housekeeper of this school, Mrs. Meagher, was a woman of much discernment and balance of character. In 1908, a white haired, majestic looking woman, she recalled her vivid memory of George Munn during the years he spent there. "George," she said, "was a great student—very reserved, and so superior to the other boys that he was much alone, although he made a great deal of fun for the boys when he was with them. His room was next to mine and was unheated. Mine was heated and when I went to Cornwall to shop for the school he always asked if he might use my room until I came

home. He locked himself in and none of the boys ever knew what he did while there. But he used to show me when I returned, the little heads and figures he had modeled. He kept all his tools and clay in a wooden box and wrapped them up with great care, always in the same pieces of paper. It was a great pity that Mr. Ledoux expelled him for helping little S—— D—— to run away. S—— was only eleven years old and was unhappy and homesick. He thought he had been unkindly treated and George believed this too. He felt his expulsion very much, and it was a wrong. He was the finest boy in the school. At that time he was very slender with large dark eyes and a remarkably sweet voice in speaking."

To return to Miss Audubon's recollections: "After an absence of many months he returned to us, as he did for several years, as to a second home, and took up his studies

in New York with one of the foremost sculptors in America, Calverley. This was in the fall of 1867, and he continued with Calverley until he went again to Europe. At this time he intended to make sculpture his life-work, and showed decided talent, making rapid progress in the art, and loving it greatly. A model of a baby's head which he executed while with Calverley is still cherished as a precious gift by the owner, the adopted sister to whom he gave it. Unfortunately none of the scraps of verse which he wrote from time to time for our games, or for small festivities, have been preserved; though these lines often contained real poetic thought and feeling."

As if in compensation for his difficult speech he showed when only a boy this poetic gift, which grew with his experience of life. He never mastered any form in verse, but the deep and true feeling and sense of beauty of these irregularly rhythmical poems is akin

to that which reached perfection of style and form in his painting.

The summer of 1870 was spent with his family in Switzerland. The event of special meaning to him during this year of travel was the Declaration of War by France on Prussia. He saw the wounded in cattle-cars at stations on their way to Paris. He and his father bought cigars and put them in the mouths of the wounded, and lighted them for those whose arms were helpless. There was great excitement wherever they journeyed and the frequent cry *"à Berlin,"* by the French who expected to win the day.

In London at the Langham Hotel they met many old friends among the refugees from France. Here much time was occupied with visits to antiquarian collections and old shops,—his first acquaintance with such places, much frequented afterwards.

In 1868, when seventeen, after nine

months' travel in Europe with his parents, he was left by them in London to begin his art studies at the South Kensington Museum. He already showed the self-reliance which marked his whole life, in refusing to accept from his father more than a monthly stipend, so small, that not only then but for the following ten years, he frequently went hungry and inadequately clothed, to first learn, and then pursue, his art. He said in after years that, when tuition, studio rent, materials and models were paid, there was little left for food! But his burning ardor for his work was such that his memory of these years was one of the most precious of his life. He once said that, during them, he knew the "Heaven of Art."

On entering the Royal Academy School in 1873, he was one of a group of men who have won distinction as painters and sculptors, nearly all of them adding R. A. to their names.



Nine Years Old



When an Art-Student

GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN

He loved London with a lover's enthusiasm and romance. Its age, its vastness and complex life,—its darkness and fogs were beloved and stimulated his imagination. During the summers he went sometimes alone, but often with one or more of his artist friends, on walking tours through the most beautiful counties of England.

These were happy days. Many pictures were painted and his sketch-books are filled with impressions of these journeys, and of journeys in France and Italy. At night, at the close of a long day of open-air painting and tramping, they would walk, six abreast, singing, through the sleepy English hamlets, finally stopping for bread and cheese and ale at some village tavern, where they talked and sang with the ruddy-cheeked farmers and teamsters who gathered there nightly. Munn could reproduce the very echo of the voices and intonation of these country-men, even to the twist of their jaws and the sol-

emn, strenuous earnestness of their eyes as they sang.

One summer, he and Seely, a student at the Royal Academy, hired a gypsy van and had it freshly painted and fitted for a summer's painting tour. A horse was borrowed from Seely's father, Captain Seely, and, after some days of journeying and searching, a beautiful height was chosen, looking down on the valley of the Wye, with Tintern Abbey just beneath their eyes. The land belonged to a baronet, who was the personage of the neighborhood, and he not only consented to their passing the summer there, but he and the families of the adjoining estates became very friendly with the two young painters, so that much happy companionship varied their days of work. They cooked their own meals, but the dish-washing proved too much for their patience and a small boy from a cottage near by was hired

to take this part of their housekeeping duties off their hands.

It was during this summer that Munn painted the large study of wild flowers, called "Meadow Sweet," exhibited in the Royal Academy in 18—. Many notices appeared in the leading London newspapers and art journals of this remarkable painting, several of them comparing it with Fantin-Latour's flower pictures and giving the palm to Munn's work.

One summer was passed in Cornwall, where the wild beauty of land and sea indelibly impressed him. He painted there his "Cornish Trawlers at Rest," which now hangs in a private gallery in the North of England and is the most treasured possession of its owners. The sales of his paintings made travel possible. Summers were passed in Normandy, and about 1876 he went for nearly two years to Brittany, living in

an inn at Pont Aven, close to the coast of Finisterre.

Pont Aven is a typical Breton village. The old houses surrounding the stone-paved *Place* are built of silver gray stone, many of them of the time of William the Conqueror. The signs over the little shop-doors bear names Welsh in spelling and pronunciation. Pen Ven, Pen Gwynn, Plouynon, might be Welshmen instead of Breton peasants. One of these Pont Aven men, a sailor, said: "I can always speak with the Welsh sailors. We understand each other." There is a legend that, in prehistoric times, Wales and Brittany joined each other and were one land. Who can say?

A little river runs through the center of the town, spanned by an old stone bridge. A grassy path winds by the river, though the *Bois d'Amour,* and a short walk through the wood takes one to an ages-old stone shrine, which Munn painted just as he saw

it, with a peasant woman kneeling before it. The river flows on under the bridge, five miles to the sea, widening rapidly and passing through a land of indescribable solitude and stillness. One village on the left of the river, and the old Château de Hénan on the right, alone break the loneliness.

The land of Finisterre is sown in that region with old stone chapels, so old that no one knows their origin; small and of simple and noble architecture and bare and empty within, kept from falling to ruin by the reverence for all that belongs to their church is dear to the Breton's heart.

Once a year, a *Pardon* is celebrated in each of these chapels, and there is no more touching sight than that of the processions of these simple people in their beautiful costumes, the white caps and brilliant satin aprons of the women giving vivid color and life to the marching groups. A sort of litany is chanted as they walk, set

to a monotonous and strangely plaintive air, which seems to express the longing, the patience, and the inexorable sorrows of poverty, separation, and shipwreck which are so interwoven with the lives of the Bretons of the sea coast.

In 1900, after his marriage to Margaret Crosby, on one August day of glowing sunshine, Munn and his wife watched one of these processions at a *Pardon* at St. Nicholas, a fishing hamlet on the coast of Finisterre.

The priest, a strong sunburned youth, in white and gold vestments, stood on the edge of the bluff where the white sandy soil was strewn with green turf and dotted with pointed cedars. Behind him, in a long uneven line, were the peasants, the women in their white caps, and many of the men carrying banners of pale blue and gold, which fluttered like splendid butterflies against the deeper blue of the sky.

The priest spoke to his bearers with solemn, almost severe, earnestness in Breton; and then turning to the sea, stretched out his arms, pardoning and blessing the dwellers in the sea, as he had pardoned and blessed those on the land, while the plaintive chant rose again. Surely a strangely beautiful custom, and one to be found nowhere but in Brittany.

During these years he exhibited at the Royal Academy, Society of British Artists, Grosvenor, Dudley and New Galleries in London, the Salon in Paris, and the galleries of Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, and other cities of Great Britain. A silver medal was awarded him by the Royal Academy School for sculpture, and by the Government the "National" gold medal for "success in Art" at the South Kensington Museum. Sir Frederick Leighton was a visitor to the Royal Academy in 1871 and gave Munn the privilege of bringing designs to

his house on Sunday mornings for suggestion and criticism.

In 1870, he met in Cornwall, before the days of the Cornish School, Percy Macquoid, with whom a close friendship was formed. When Sir Henry Peek, Bart. M.P., wanted a copy of Hogarth's great life-size, full length portrait of Capt. Coram (the founder of the famous Foundling Hospital in London) the commission was given to Percy Macquoid, who "farmed the job" to Munn, and the latter painted it during weeks of constant work, with all the activities of the Hospital going on about him.

Sir John Millais was a visitor at the Royal Academy in 1872, and also in the seventies, Munn, Whistler, Madox-Brown, Ted Hughes and Frank Lathrop were drawing and painting from the same model, "the most famous one" at that time at Victor Barth's school.

Russell Sturgis gave in *Scribner's Magazine* in 1908 his estimate of Munn's work as follows:

"The paintings of George Frederick Munn are marked examples of that tendency toward naturalism of the best sort which is characteristic of American landscape painting.

" 'Normandy' shows a side of his work which is indeed not touched upon in any of the reproductions of his paintings which follow. This picture, more than any other composition of his known to the present writer, is 'impressionistic' in its drawing, by which phrase is meant that no attempt has been made to render details or even to express strongly such important facts as the growth of the trees, the modulation of the earth's surface, the articulation of the leafage, the building up of clouds. Such a treatment of landscape effect is precisely as legitimate as a minutely rendered set of de-

tails working together to build up a result—a picture like one of the Liber Studiorum prints, with great insistence upon the anatomy of tree forms. Just as legitimate, and in one sense more nearly artistic, from the fact that it is so much easier to invest such a study as this with lovely light and warm color than it is to combine those supreme excellences with the severe drawing of natural form.

"But consider 'Normandy Sand Dunes' in which the trees are drawn with almost a Turneresque touch—with quite a Turneresque desire for accuracy in the anatomy of ramification. This picture is, indeed, a faithful study of a hillside crowned by the trees in question; but that is precisely the theme of these remarks. Munn knew how to represent such a simple piece of natural landscape, seizing its charm and recording it for the permanent possession of those before whose eyes it would never appear again

in reality. As for its chief meaning, there is really nothing more delightful than a faultless piece of natural scenery, and all that the landscape painter can do—all that we dare to ask of Martin or of Inness, of Constable or of Turner, is to reproduce that when seen, or insensibly to modify something not quite so perfect until it reaches the ideal glory which the mind of the great artist conceives as the practiced brush does its work.

" 'Brittany' is a picture reminding us of what Homer Martin used to paint, during his last few years of life, from 1890 to 1897. In it is seen the same reserve—the same content with a simple scene; a slight hollow between slowly rising hills, and a suggested water-course marking the bottom of the little valley. The top of the hill on the left is marked by a screen of trees, between the trunks of which the light of the horizon is seen to shine—so thin is the screen, so few

are the trees which make it up. In this way the hill is insisted on as a narrow ridge, a part of a rolling country, beyond which ridge another such valley will be found, if we walk only a quarter of a mile in that direction. On the right the same structure of the ground is visible, but there the rain and the rough weather have eaten away the rounded hill into the semblance of a little cliff, and the scraggy bushes emphasize and insist upon that broken character of the ground. Between these slight acclivities is the low-lying valley with its stream, a bowlder or two laid bare by the deeper run of the winter torrent, and what seem to be dwarf willows here and there set in the wet ground near the brook. Long and low stretches this green landscape, a perfect reach of pasture ground as seen in our eastern country-side, and above it is a sky full of summer clouds of that uncertain August weather which threatens and yet promises, offering alter-

nation of showers and sunshine. The disturbed birds which fill the sky with their busy flight, sweeping by as if to escape a threatened cataclysm, suggest a storm more decidedly than the clouds alone can do. The more I contemplate this picture, the more pleasant it is to me. It brings up again that obvious remark printed above—that there is no landscape more lovely than a faithful or slightly modified study of peaceful natural conditions.

"A piece of more thoughtful work, of more deliberate expression of sentiment, appears in which a study of a steep river-bank reminds one of Homer Martin's work during the summer he spent in Normandy. This is an admirable composition, whether it owes its charm to nature, almost wholly, or has been in part the work of the artist's modifying mind and hand. The simple houses, crowning the cliff in the most perfect fashion, lend themselves at once to that place in

nature and in the work of art; and beyond them to the right are seen the spires which suggest a larger stretch of the town in that direction and the presence of a community of men. Then the extreme foreground is filled with the fisher's boat, a yawl-rigged cutter, on the forward deck of which a small flame and rising smoke are visible; whether this is to attract fish to the net or whether it is part of the crew's cookery being uncertain. It makes a streaming banner of light in the foreground, and that is all that we ask. Here, again, birds, numerous and in this case large and near at hand, are sweeping by, showing us how strongly the artist was impressed by the free life of the flying creatures.

"These admirable pictures are good to see, even in their dress of black and white reproduction. If the canvases could be brought together in one of our museum galleries,

even for a loan exhibition, that would be a fortunate town and a fortunate museum which should possess them for a day."

This tribute of Russell Sturgis' to Munn's work was a spontaneous expression of enthusiasm from one who had never seen him and knew him only by report.

One of his oldest friends, The Honorable Stephen Coleridge, writes of him:

"It is now more than twenty-five years ago that George Munn came upon us all in London, bearing about him something so fresh and strange as instantly to command attention, and in a little while revealing such qualities of heart and mind as to win the affection of all who came to know him well.

"Painting after all is a form of expression or nothing at all, and a narrow mind and a cold heart never yet had anything to confer

upon mankind, but George Munn possessed a wide vision and most tender sympathies, and he cherished a sense of honor almost too delicate for these material days, and his exquisite sensibilities and stainless taste were present in every line of his work.

The picture of his that I possess hung in the place of honor at the end of the long room at the Grosvenor Gallery in its last year of existence and was called 'In Chancery.' It is a large work and represents an old Manor House standing desolate and empty, with the garden before it full of tall grass and wild flowers, and behind, a mass of dark immemorial trees with the rocks wheeling above them. The dignity and sorrow of greatness passed away speaks eloquently from the splendid canvas. The sense is there of ancient family honor and nobility of life gone away from the old home, which stands forlorn yet still stately in its loneli-

ness: of silence, and abiding peace. A man who could look long at this picture without being deeply moved must have a heart of stone.

"All great painting appeals to the heart because it comes from it, and for this reason I value this picture more than any that I possess."

Madame François Millet, the wife of François Millet, and daughter-in-law of Jean François Millet, formerly Miss Geraldine Reed of New York, wrote of his paintings in the *New York Times,* of April, 1911, on the occasion of a commemorative exhibition of his work in New York, with an enthusiasm founded on great knowledge and the keen artistic sympathy of a fellow-painter, the rare quality of whose own work has won appreciative recognition in both America and France:

"To the Editor of *The New York Times:*

"There is a satisfaction in seeing justice done and order come out of disorder which amounts to a keen joy. It is with feelings of this sort that one goes from one to another of these admirable pictures by George F. Munn—gathered together for the first time four years after the death of the painter and after having been painted more than twenty years. That these pictures were painted twenty years ago is a very important fact to consider in looking at them. It is to be regretted that others now in Europe are not here to show the capacity for reproduction of George Munn. But all add to a comprehension of the ardent enthusiasm for nature and the curiously pure taste of the young

artist: for in England at the time they were painted Constable and his French followers had not yet had the influence they have gained since.

"About twenty years ago there were precious few who were free from the morbid æstheticism or the commonplace anecdotism of English art. That Munn admired Daubigny is plain, but his admiration served to stimulate his own individuality, and his intense enthusiasm before certain manifestations of nature and their strong impressions have been kept in hand by the scrupulous probity of anxiety to search and find the most frank and personal rendering of the scene. That Munn saw more and vibrated more passionately than many, can be seen, and proves that he had the quality in common only with artists

of race, not to spend their enthusiasm in the beginning, but to preserve it and pass on to the spectator the freshness of the emotion until the last touch of the brush. Thus in his work certain skies, certain stretches of moorland, are so full of air and light.

"This is the painting of a born colorist. We are glad to be able to see for the first time the extent of the gifts and the breadth and flexibility of his art.

"Though illness prevented him from painting during the past twenty years, this exhibition should convince and proclaim the rank that George Frederick Munn takes and will hold in American art. One work at least of this remarkable artist should be placed in a permanent exhibition in New York in

> order that an American painter of such great accomplishment, strong individuality, and pervading sense of beauty may come to his own. It must not be forgotten that these paintings exhibited at the Cottier Gallery have stood the test of time."

During one winter in Boston his studio was next to that of Joseph Decamp, who expressed after Munn's death his admiration for him and his work. He wrote of it:

> "The paintings of George Frederick Munn represent a very great artistic sophistication. Perhaps their chief characteristic is their tremendous artistic refinement of perception. Always admirable and handsome in color, he did not lean to that in preference to everything else. Beauty of composition and draftsmanship, the

whole selection of what he chose to paint, his sense of the beautiful, his drawing of nature, and of the infinite device that plants and trees make in nature, his personal choice of how all that went—was part of his artistic sophistication. His pictures were compositions of the composer and the draftsman. Objects are as finely placed in them as in the best of the Japanese prints. That is *their* particular thing and he had it. Artistic precision was a part of his temperament and yet, except in a few things—composition and draftsmanship—he was not precise.

"The strength and beauty of his mental equipment was shown after his nervous attacks when he came out of them with his mind washed

clear like crystal. He was utterly reasonable, and with great dignity had a modesty that made him shrink, sometimes from his friends, as one who would say 'I am not worthy.'

"The whole man, both in relation to his art and to life, was a creature of such refinement and delicate balance of artistic perceptions and sensibilities that he demanded of himself, of his effort and of his work, more than was almost ever humanly possible and the quality of the work he left behind him is a thing to be thankful for and to cherish."

About 1875, George Frederick Watts saw a copy of one of his own paintings which Munn had made. He said, "I must have

that man to work with me," and sent for the young man, who for seven or eight months worked steadily with the great master.

Watts was then living in Little Kensington House and the two painters dined daily together at one o'clock. Their relation therefore was one which could have no parallel in any more formal acquaintance. In speaking of this period, Munn said that his reverence for Watts amounted to awe. He had never seen anything like Watts' absorption in his own work. He literally began to paint as soon as it was light and continued until darkness. His art and he turned aside for nothing.

On one occasion, the King, Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, wished him to come to a garden party at Sandringham. Watts' answer to the Prince was, "I can't, for I have no high hat." "Come in your soft hat," said the Prince.

When strongly possessed by his creative

power, Watts talked little, and at such time Munn respected his silence, and the midday meal was eaten together with hardly a word spoken: but we can well imagine that the silence was full of sympathy.

One day when Watts had sent him to an unused studio to find some canvases, the search was a long one and, in lifting out some paintings that stood with their faces to the wall, Munn came upon the famous painting of Ellen Terry as Ophelia. Its haunting beauty and pathos impressed him profoundly and remained with him always.

With years, a great love of reading grew in Munn, with a naturally fine discrimination for literature as for all other Arts, and an open book usually lay on some table or window-ledge near his easel. It was most often a volume of poetry, or biography, although his interest in books was universal as was

his interest in life; but his best energies were given to the great finished works and their great makers.

Golden opportunities were offered him for the development of these tastes. Carlyle was still living, Huxley, Tyndall and Darwin he met constantly, going in and out of Burlington House. George Eliot was receiving a coterie of distinguished friends on Sunday afternoons at home and was always to be seen at the Saturday "Pops." She had, at this time, an enthusiastic following of young men, and Munn was in close touch with those who knew her intimately.

To quote from Munn's reminiscences:

"I have, at rare moments, been conscious of that strange elixir stirring in the brain from which eloquence is born, demanding speech—and I have never forgotten a speech made in the House of Commons, some time I think in the seventies, by the member from

Newcastle, Joseph Cowen. He spoke with a strong burr or north country accent, and this time he spoke about the sadness and terrors of war, making a wonderful image in words about the consequences of battle—Death. The image, if I rightly remember, was of the Angel of Death hovering over the land, her sable wings trembling and menacing its people. I remember reading about Garibaldi's visit to England in '58 (?) and his stopping, while in the North, with Joseph Cowen,—not then, I suppose, a Member of Parliament. I heard quite often Disraeli in his prime, in the sixties and seventies, Bright, Gladstone, and very many great speakers and debaters.

"I remember one evening, at Mr. Frank Holl's studio in St. John's Wood, hearing George DuMaurier sing to perfection, it seemed to me. Mr. Holl had asked many painters to spend the evening in his studio to see his portraits destined for the annual

exhibition at the Royal Academy, and it was on that occasion that DuMaurier sang. And this reminds me of that other wonderful 'Punch' man whom Mr. Henry James has written of so searchingly—Charles Keene—a master indeed in his way and medium. I was a member at that time of the Arts Club—then in Hanover Square—and Keene would come in very frequently in the afternoon and smoke his cutty pipe—a *very* small clay—and talk delightfully. No one painted him as Sancho Panza, I fear—more's the pity! Those were deeply interesting days, nay, years, in my life and the memories of them are curiously vivid."

Although Watts was separated from Ellen Terry at the time of Munn's association with him, the young man was constantly in her companionship in the bloom of her young womanhood, and at the height of her gifted and bewitching personality. Sir Henry Ir-

ving and Modjeska he also met frequently, and formed a lasting friendship with Johnston Forbes-Robertson.

On June 1, 1882, he married an English widow, but the marriage proved unhappy. They were separated permanently in 1885, and later by a divorce.

At Villerville, en route to Venice, in 1883, he contracted a fever which developed on his arrival into malignant typhus. His life was spared, but he never recovered his full health or strength. Despite the repeated warning of three Italian and four English doctors Robert Browning came to inquire for him every day, and later often came to his studio in London.

Of Browning, Munn said:

"Robert Browning was undoubtedly the greatest poet of our time—and no truer singer ever lived to grace literature or teach mankind. He was, naturally, and as a direct consequence of his might as poet and

teacher, in its fullest significance, a man—brave, gentle, beautiful, alike in cast of mind and character; surely a living lesson, in his whole life and work, to all. The qualities that most impressed me in him were his sympathy and knowledge.

"My first meeting with Mr. Browning was curious. I was asked to dine at Mrs. Arthur Bronson's, in Venice, and it is to this delightful woman he dedicates his last volume of poems, 'Asolando,'—'gratefully and affectionately'—and we all know there is no one who deserves the fame and honor that it conveys, more. When dinner was announced, I did not catch the lady's name to whom Mrs. Bronson assigned me. We sat for a moment in silence—when I said to her, 'I hear Mr. Browning is at table—do you know him?'

" 'Yes,' she replied, 'we have been very dear friends for many years.'

"She pointed him out to me as she spoke,

on the right of our hostess, and I, for the first time, knowingly, saw my literary Idol —the author of 'Men and Women,' 'Andrea del Sarto,' 'The Blot on the 'Scutcheon.'

"After a few moments, I said, 'I fear your name escaped me: tell me yourself and I promise not to forget it.'

"Her answer was 'Miss Browning!'

"I remember they made me go home early, for I was then developing the first stages of malignant typhus and a few days afterwards became delirious and remained so for weeks.

"Mr. Browning came to see me afterward in my London studio and I remember his saying, apropos of the Browning Societies of London, Boston, etc.: 'Why, anybody can understand what I mean—except some of those early things—and I myself depend a good deal on these Browning Societies for much that is new to me in some of my early work!'

"This was said with a quaint look of fun in his face and eyes!"

In Venice, and again two weeks after his return to London, while weak from the effects of the fever, Munn separated permanently from his first wife. He says, "I was then penniless and ill. My people were too far away to understand the true state of things. Illness, combined with pride, kept me from appealing to any one who might help me. I, hungry and shabby, held my own with the loyal help of two or three faithful friends until my family, learning my condition from a friend, sent for me."

Weakened by actual want and fever he returned to America where "the real breakdown came." "Only the love and care and, best of all, divine tact of those nearest, saved me, and I showed gleams of returning power." This power proved to be the highest qualities of his nature; his heroic endur-

ance and patience, and the strength of unselfish, self-obliterating love with which he blessed the lives most closely allied to his.

The motto adopted by him at Bellagio, June 15, 1871, "Equal to either fortune," was an inadequate expression of the strength of his spiritual consciousness, which was as natural and happy as it was unrelated to prevailing theological opinion. His tenet was that he believed in a personal God, who is a Father to His children, whose only help is in their dependence on Him. What men name sin seemed in his eyes so close to the development that men call virtue,—and human ambitions and successes so far removed from the greatness of God, that the mystical uplift of his soul was calm, confident, yet as simple and humble as the faith of a child. He felt himself equal to either fortune.

He once formulated a creed for a society of his friends to be named "The Illuminati"; the object being "to gain and give light:

i. e.: the light of heaven and of the world, the Light of Knowledge, the Light of Hope and Pleasure, of Charity to all Men; the Light of Love and Obedience to God." The members were to pledge themselves "to love one another in holiness, to be charitable in word, thought and deed, and to be good and kind to the poor and sick, the old, the young, the unfortunate and forsaken, *and to all animals.*"—The last a most characteristic touch!

In the brief period between his return to London after the fever and his departure for America, when illness, poverty and the cruel misery of his broken career were new to him, he records his enjoyment of a service in Westminster Abbey (August 4, 1885) when "the singing and procession were very grand." It was his habit to note on the edge of his sketch books texts that impressed him

and he quoted constantly from the Bible and the great poets in these faintly outlined marginal notes.

After his return to America, under the tender ministrations of a specially beloved sister, Mrs. Pier, and her husband, his forces at length rallied so that, in the summer of 1888, he was able to join the artist colony in Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts. From there he used to go to Annisquam, a few miles distant, where the sand dunes, sand beaches and marshes, the sea and inlets and low-growing trees, and bushes, all made a landscape that had for him great charm and suggestiveness. But the first outbreak of serious grippe in the winter of 1889–1890, attacked him with a sort of relentless fury and, from the Massachusetts General Hospital where he was carried very ill, he went to Brookline, convalescent from grippe but weakened from nerve exhaustion.

Years before, he made a memorandum of a book by "Thomas Ashe, published by Bell and Sons, London," and continued, "He wrote flawless English, a model none better, for all poets, especially women. Ashe—what a suggestive name:—must have loved some woman—but did she refuse him as Sir F. Leighton and Swinburne's loves did? When I find her will she pass me by too? I shall be 'equal to either fortune' when the great question is asked."

It now looked as if his power as an artist was destroyed, the flame of his life flickered as if going out, while "Love had passed him by," and only a heart-hunger remained to give poignancy to despair.

But at the moment of his deepest anguish deliverance awaited him.

It so happened that Margaret Crosby was staying in Brookline at the time of Munn's



MARGARET CROSBY MUNN

coming, and their meeting was like a life-giving elixir to both.

The veil cannot now be lifted from a romance that was one of the events which take the world out of the commonplace. There are sympathies that sometimes stir human beings to unerring intuitions. By one of these supreme intuitions, Munn recognized at once that he had found in her the woman who was for him the realization of his best aspirations. Slower to come to acknowledgment, but as sure in prophetic insight, she at once divined his greatness and set herself to the task of his welfare and happiness.

But the condition of his health held no promise, except to the two most deeply concerned. By the judgment of friends and doctors, a forced separation was effected within a few months of their meeting, which proved a source of tragic suffering to both, and there were in all ten years of pain and

separation before the floods abated, and the sunshine of comparative health, freedom and complete happiness blessed their heroic endurance.

They were married May 17, 1900. A friend of great discernment who had the opportunity of observing them closely writes of them: "There are marriages on earth that seem to be but recognitions of matings solemnized on some heavenly height before the world was. Such was the marriage of George Munn and Margaret Crosby. They had a genius for devotion, and through the years of their wedded life these two never ceased to inspire each other with comradeship like the sweet, high converse of the early years of marriage."

There was a masculine admirableness in Munn which exhibited itself in everything he did and everything he said, however much it may now seem that his efforts were finally

crowned only with earthly defeat. His devotion to his wife and friends was luminous with the strength and steadfastness of the immortal side of his nature. He did not like rhapsodies on his painting. There are lovers of his works who remember the irony with which in a few words he unmasked their ignorance of true art, or science, of sound criticism. Even to the wife who did homage to his genius he sometimes said, "Poor, deluded little girl, what a good showman you would make!"

No flattery ever shook his judgment of men, of manners, of right proportions. This gave his comments weight. "Across the Roses," said his bride opposite him at the wedding breakfast as she touched her glass to his. "Across the Ages, Margaret," he answered.

With him every sentiment touched the eternal life of man. It had no winding up, no weakness. It was this vista in even his

witticisms that gave them tang and robustness.

Words had their total value when spoken by him. His deep musical voice and the slight hesitation which at intervals preceded a word, causing it to come with an added force, gave it meaning and emphasis; his own vivid realization of its purport and his grasp and insight into his subject, and a background of his imagination that, in some subtle fashion, made his hearer aware of all its possibilities, often gave a tremendous, almost dynamic, power to a word. The listener felt to the full its danger, its blessing or its humor.

His vocabulary was large and picturesque; a mingling of the vigorous Anglo-Saxon of the brilliant Englishmen with whom he had associated for so many years, touched by his personal gifts of poetic imagination and humor. He had the vernacular



GEORGE AND MARGARET MUNN ON THE STEPS OF THE HOME OF FRANÇOIS MILLET AT BARBIZON

of his profession,—the art-talk of the studios, and he seemed to catch from the air the freshest slang in any country in which he happened to be living. The result was a rich and racy phraseology in which every word fitted its meaning with a novel and impressive effect.

This mastery of words was shown in his letters, of which many hundreds exist and which are full of a spontaneous eloquence and an artistic finish that is as rare as it was unconscious; and also in his many poems which are full of real, poetic expression and an indescribable depth and sincerity of emotion. Back of all he said was the force of his spirit which lived each moment of life truthfully without pretense to himself or to others. It was this sincerity that made society in its limited meaning irksome to him. He used to say, "I can't stand the talk." His sense of the effort, the "talking to order," often so fruit-

less in any real communion or pleasure, made him escape social life in its definite and organized forms. But natural, spontaneous companionship with his friends or with mere acquaintances, where there was any possible basis for meeting, was a delight to him. The natural elements of life itself were sufficient to make a Festival for him. Like the Greek Poets in Keats' ode, he was "Rich in the simple worship of a day."

Russell Sturgis, in his essay on the Art of George Munn, speaks of this quality in his works,—his content with a simple scene. He was in touch with all classes through a democratic sense that was not a theory nor a conscious practice, but something innate. He seemed always aware instantaneously of the man or woman, as they really were, beneath the outside accidents of birth and occupation, and the dignity and pathos of their humanity came before everything else with him.

As with Robert Browning, the tone and quality of Munn's voice was exactly the same in speaking to an inferior and to an equal; yet while this won the love of his fellow-men and women, no servant or person below him in position ever ventured on a liberty with him. Some one who had seen him only once, wrote of him: "I had an impression of great gentleness and great strength, as of one who had received his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God."

He had the hatred of destruction natural to the creative temperament. War, he thought stupid, as well as cruel. He disliked everything connected with it and seemed to have a prophetic sense of the time to come when the world would waken universally to the same conviction and the method of legalized killing of human beings by each other to settle wrongs or differences would be set aside for some more reasonable adjustment.

When all New York went to Riverside Drive to look at the warships anchored in a sinister line in the river, he, chancing to pass with a friend, who afterwards recollected his words, did not turn his head to look at them. "They are back numbers," he said.

In looking at the illustrated papers, he turned over the pages with pictures of troops without a glance, saying: "They are totally uninteresting; the lines are all monotonous. They mean nothing to me." When he met soldiers in the street he said in Falstaff's words: "Food for powder."

He had never, even as a boy, been willing to either fish or hunt and was oriental in his unwillingness to kill. His regard for life itself in all forms was united with a fearlessness that had its root in his sense of immortality that lighted up Death itself and took all its terror away for him and played over existence like a quenchless light.

Yet all this was veiled to those who, from

some accident of circumstance or limitation of mind or temperament, failed to recognize him. To such he remained silent and aloof and made no effort to reveal himself. But he rendered those who did not understand him the same service and kindness that he did those who were akin to his spirit.

During the productive years of his life, between 1873 and 1886, before the typhus fever ended his active career as an artist, he worked incessantly and with great intensity, painting over a hundred pictures, the majority of which were very beautiful works, fully up to the level of his best style. These were both landscapes and figure paintings, more usually the former; but, as he developed in later years, his desire and all his artistic impulse tended toward portraiture and figure painting.

A famous American painter on seeing a head of an Arab that he had painted, said:

"He will be greater as a painter of human beings than of landscapes." The day on which he began a new picture was a gala day for him, and at such times he was filled with a strong enthusiasm that was communicated to any one who happened to be near him.

Johnston Forbes-Robertson, in the tribute to George Munn quoted before, speaks of a "reverence for men and things being the lasting grace for a man who would pursue art" and says: "This precious grace George Munn possessed in the highest degree." He saw life and soul in all things as Walt Whitman did. This was not from a conscious exercise of his reason, but from some involuntary inner knowledge or conviction.

He handled all inanimate objects with great gentleness, and on seeing some one near him throw a discarded box to the floor, he exclaimed: "How could you throw down that beautiful box! You hurt it."

Often when carrying a wrap over his arm

for his wife or a friend, he would answer if they wished to relieve him of its burden—"Why do you take it away? It is so happy here."

He was a cosmopolite in the breadth and freedom from prejudice with which he regarded all phases of human existence in all parts of the world. This quality and the strength and fire of his humanity made him identify himself with any community among which he might happen to be living and he drew the hearts of men and women to him like a magnet.

It was difficult for him to see or imagine evil. He seldom condemned any one, and of a wrong-doer whose fault or sin had not been carried to a heinous degree he was apt to say, "He, or she, had been rather silly." But real selfishness, cruelty, dishonesty or impurity aroused in him a burning indignation and anger that would have been hard for the offender to face.

That he was generous was a natural result of a nature that instinctively sought the good of his fellow men before his own.

One instance out of countless ones will suffice as a typical example. A man, who, without being an intimate, could claim sufficient friendship to warrant an appeal, came to him pleading need, and asking for quite a large sum. Munn was at that time living on a very small income hardly sufficient for the bare needs of existence, but he had always a sort of prevision which made him save from his income, no matter how small it was, for, as he sometimes said: "It may be needed." Needed, it usually was, but for some one else—not for himself! He was convinced on this occasion that the appeal was from a real necessity. He replied, "I have not seen as much as the sum you wish for a long time, but you shall have what I have," and then gave all that he had managed to save from his income.

There was always in his giving the spirit of Sir Philip Sidney—"Thy need is greater than mine," with no concern for the consequences to himself. He had the unique power of standing aside and letting his own external life wither that another life might bloom—and doing it with joy.

In his generosity he always touched the Universal brotherhood of man. This sense of brotherhood included animals, with whom as with Nature he seemed to have a secret understanding.

There was a curious confusion in his dumb companions between him and their own masters, and it is remembered in more than one instance how the dog of a friend would stand irresolutely when Munn parted from them in the street and first follow Munn and then his master.

In the woods Munn could call squirrels and birds to him, and his joy in the fields and forests was irresistible in its contagion.

He seemed to be most completely himself when leading a perfectly natural life in the open. There was in him at such times—in his whole being and in his care-free mirth—a mood that seemed to belong to some prehistoric race when men and nature stood far closer to each other than they do now.

Hawthorne describes such a being in Donatello and some of his words bring George Munn more vividly before those who saw him at such times than any others could possibly do, if one can imagine a faun who was also a spiritual being.

> "Nature needed, and still needs, this beautiful creature; standing betwixt man and animal, sympathizing with each, comprehending the speech of either race, and interpreting the whole existence of one to the other. What a pity that he has forever vanished from the hard and dusty paths of life!

"Imagine, now, a real being similar to this mythic Faun; how happy, how genial, how satisfactory would be his life, enjoying the warm, sensuous, earthy side of nature; reveling in the merriment of woods and streams; living as our four-footed kindred do,—as mankind did in its innocent childhood; before sin, sorrow, or morality itself had ever been thought of! I suppose the Faun had no conscience, no remorse, no burthen on the heart, no troublesome recollections of any sort; no dark future either.

"His usual modes of demonstration were by the natural language of gesture, the instinctive movement of his agile frame, and the unconscious play of his features, which, within a limited range of thought and emotion, would speak volumes in a moment.

"He gave Miriam the idea of a being not precisely man, nor yet a child, but, in

a high and beautiful sense, an animal—a creature in a state of development less than what mankind has attained, yet the more perfect within itself for that very deficiency.

"In Donatello there was a charm of indescribable grotesqueness, hand in hand with grace; sweet, bewitching, most provocative of laughter, and yet akin to pathos, so deeply did it touch the heart.

"Donatello snapped his fingers above his head, as fauns and satyrs taught us first to do, and seemed to radiate jollity out of his whole person.

"Beautiful, strong, brave, kindly, sincere, of honest impulses and endowed with simple tastes and the love of homely pleasures, he was believed to possess gifts by which he could associate himself with the wild things of the forests, and with the fowls of the air, and could feel a sympathy

even with the trees, among which it was his joy to dwell."

Munn did not seem to feel the need of human companionship when living under natural conditions that satisfied his love of beauty and freedom. He once lived alone for two years on the coast of New England in a cottage that for the greater part of the year was the only inhabited house on the point on which it stood. He went for his meals to the little village a quarter of a mile away. The cottage was taken care of by people who came from the same distance. When asked if he had not been lonely, he replied, "I cannot say that I was." In one of his letters to a friend, he says, "You always need human beings, but the sky and the flowers and the trees are people enough for me."

To prison in words the essence of humor

is perhaps beyond the power of man. Even wit when reported apart from the personality that conceived it, and the moment that gave it life, loses half its power. With George Munn, his mirth-producing humor lay as much in the tone of his voice, in the emphasis or inflection of a word or the lift of an eyebrow as in the words themselves.

A charming fairy tale tells of a faithful servant who, to keep his heart from breaking for the sorrows of his master, bound it with bands of iron. When his master's troubles were past and he saw him happy, the bands broke one by one and his heart was free. The humor of George Munn had the power of loosening and breaking the bonds of care and sorrow, so that the spirits of those who fell under its spell were literally dissolved into helpless and carefree laughter.

To gain an impression of what it was like one must turn to Du Maurier's enchanted

pages, where so often he expresses the inexpressible. In his descriptions of Barty Josselin's humor, in *The Martian,* are pages that might have been written about Munn.

Let us with a reverential salutation to Du Maurier, a salutation of the heart as well as of the soul and the brain, take some of his words about Barty Josselin and substitute the name of George Munn. Let us change and omit here and there a word or two to make our quotations applicable for our purpose, and let us find a portrait in words of the humorous side as well as of some other sides of Munn's temperament for those who did not know him, as well as for those who did.

In the first place, his beauty when a child was absolutely noble as will be readily believed by all who have known him since. And then as a boy, how funny he was without effort, and with a fun that never failed! He was a born humorist of the graceful kind—ever playing the fool, and somehow always apropos; such very simple buffooneries as they were,

too—that gave him (and us) such stupendous delight!

For instance during his school days. He is sitting at study and M. Bonzig is usher.

"*Fermez votre pupitre,* Munn," (Barty) said M. Bonzig.

Munn shut his desk and beamed genially at the usher.

"What book have you got there, Munn—Cæsar or Cornelius Nepos?"

Munn held the book with its title-page open for M. Bonzig to read.

"Are you dumb, Munn? Can't you speak?"

Munn tried to speak, but uttered no sound.

"Munn, come here—opposite me."

Munn came and stood opposite M. Bonzig and made a nice little bow.

"What have you got in your mouth, Munn?"

Munn shrugged his shoulders and looked pensive, but spoke never a word.

"Open quick the mouth, Munn!"

And Monsieur Bonzig, leaning over the table, deftly put his thumb and forefinger between the boy's lips, and drew forth slowly a large white pocket-handkerchief, which seemed never to end, and threw it on the floor with solemn dignity.

The whole school-room was convulsed with laughter.

"Munn—leave the room—you will be severely punished, as you deserve—you are a vulgar buffoon—a jocrisse—a paltoquet, a mountebank! Go, petit polisson—go!"

The polisson picked up his pocket-handkerchief and went—quite quietly, with simple, manly grace.

As he grew older, it was quite impossible to know George at all intimately and not do whatever he wanted you to do. Whatever he wanted, he wanted intensely, and at once; and he had such a droll and engaging way of expressing that hurry and intensity and especially of expressing his gratitude and delight when what he wanted was what he got—that you

could not for the life of you hold your own! *Tout vient a ceux qui ne sait pas attendre!* Besides which, every now and then, if things didn't go quite as he wished, he would fly into comic rages, and become quite violent and intractable for at least five minutes, and for quite five minutes more he would silently sulk. And then, just as suddenly, he would forget all about it, and become once more the genial, affectionate, and caressing creature he always was.

His idea of a pleasant evening was billiards or cards or music or being funny in any way one could; and for this he had quite a special gift; he had sudden droll inspirations that made one absolutely hysterical—mere things of suggestive look or sound or gesture, and making one laugh till one's sides ached. And he never failed of success in achieving this.

Among the dullest and gravest of us, and even some of the most high-minded, there is often a latent longing for this kind of happy, idiotic fooling, and a grateful fondness for those who can supply it without effort and who delight in doing so.

Now and again George's face would take on a look so ineffably, pathetically, angelically simple and childlike that it moved one to the very depths, and made one feel like father and mother to him in one! It was the true revelation of his innermost soul, which in many ways remained that of a child even in his middle age and till he died.

He who lived on bread and cheese for weeks to save his money for his painting expenses and who was the most abstemious of men would, when a slender purse made a good meal impossible, paint in words for himself and some equally hungry companions the boiled leg of mutton, not overdone; the mashed turnips; the mealy potato; the capersauce. He would imitate the action of the carver and the sound of the carving-knife making its first keen cut while the hot pink

gravy runs down the sides. Then he would wordily paint a French roast chicken and its rich brown gravy and its watercresses; the pommes sautées; the crisp, curly *salade aux fines herbes!* And his companions, still hungry, would laugh till their eyes watered as well as their mouths. When it came to the sweets, the apple-puddings and gooseberry pies and Devonshire cream and brown sugar, there was no more laughing, for then George's talent soared to real genius,—and genius is a serious thing. And as to his celery and Stilton cheese— But there! it's lunch-time, and I am beginning to feel a little peckish myself. . . .

Without any technical knowledge, he had a great love of music and grew more and more deeply sensitive to its influence. First of all, his priest friend would play the "Moonlight Sonata," let us say; and George would lean back and listen with his eyes shut, and almost believe that Beethoven was talking to him like a father, and pointing out to him how small was the difference, really, between the greatest earthly joy and the greatest earthly sorrow; these were not like black and white, but merely different shades of gray, as on moonlit nights a long way off! and Time, what a reconciler it was—like distance! and Death, what a perfect resolution of all possible discords.

Then the good Mozart would say:

"Lieber George—I'm so stupid about *earthly* things that I could never even say Boh to a goose, so I can't give you any good advice; all my heart overflowed into my brain when I was quite a little boy and made music for grown-up people to hear; from the day of my birth to my fifth birthday I had gone on remembering everything, but learning nothing new—remembering all that music," that came out of heaven. "And I went on remembering more and more till I was thirty-five; and even then there was such a lot more of it where that came from that it tired me to try and remember so much—

and I went back thither. And thither back shall you go, too, George—when you are some thirty years older! And you already know from me how pleasant life is up there—how sunny and genial and gay: and how graceful and innocent and amiable and well-bred the natives—and what beautiful prayers we sing, and what lovely gavottes and minuets we dance—and how tenderly we make love—and what funny tricks we play! and how handsome and well-dressed and kind we all are—and the likes of you, how welcome! Thirty years is soon over, George, George!"

So this extraordinary susceptibility to musical sound went on growing in George Munn since his troubles had overtaken him, and with it an extraordinary sensitiveness to the troubles of other people, their partings and bereavements and wants, and aches and pains, even those of people he didn't know: and especially to woes of children, and dogs and cats and horses, and aged folk—and all the live things that have to be driven to market and killed for our eating—or shot at for our fun!

He was funny in a good-natured manner, and made me laugh more than any one else. Always in a good temper and very caressing: putting his arm around one, and was often a kind of jolly, boon companion with no disdain for a good bottle of wine or a good bottle of beer. His artistic tastes were very catholic; for, after the great old masters, he was prostrate in admiration before Watts, Millais, Burne-Jones, Fred Walker and Charles Keene.

I quote from the French Journalist's account of Barty Josselin: "I remark that from time to time, just as the moon veils itself behind a passing cloud, the radiance of his physiognomy is eclipsed by the expression of a sadness, immense, mysterious, infinite: this is followed by a look of angelic candor and sweetness and gentle heroism, that moves you strangely even to the heart, and makes appeal to all your warmest and deepest sympathies—the look of a very mascu-

line Joan of Arc! You don't know why, but you feel you would make any sacrifice for a man who looks at you like that, follow him to the death—lead a forlorn hope at his bidding.

"He was happiest of all with the good denizens of Bohemia who have known want and temptation and come unscathed out of the fire, but with their affectations and insincerities and conventionalities all burnt away. It is not a bad school in which to graduate, if you can do so without loss of principle, or sacrifice of the delicate bloom of honor and self-respect.

"With these he loved his oldest friends, those who knew and understood him best, and after them the proletarians, who had good, straightforward manners and no pretension —the laborer, the skilled artisan, especially the toilers of the sea."

Again we must thank Du Maurier as we close these paraphrases from *The Martian.*

Munn was ambitious, not from a desire to excel beyond others, but from his love of perfection that made him profoundly earnest in doing well whatever he did. That he did excel, his work as well as his medals and the praise of his peers attest, and in lesser matters the word "won" frequently occurs in his little diaries after a record of a ten-

nis or billiard tournament, in both of which games he delighted.

In reviewing one's experience with humanity, it is not difficult to find a fair proportion of human beings, both men and women, who are living examples of a stern moral code, in whom we find that that crowning grace of morality, the love that *fulfills* the law, has never seemed to complete their virtue. To George Munn, love was both the beginning and end, and through the depth and sincerity of his affections, he "fulfilled the law" with many supreme acts of unselfishness, entirely unconscious that he had reached the height to which all great religions lead. He realized, as few do, that the happiness of the heart was really what counted in life. "The great thing," he used to say to his wife, in speaking of human beings, "is to make them happy," and this he did in countless ways when he was well—

often like Barty Josselin, by simply making them laugh with such abandonment that the care and sorrow and struggle of life were blotted out for a happy moment.

He probably had as many disappointments in womanhood as an ideal, as most men, but he firmly held to his belief that women were born to command and that their power to direct should be given the fullest scope. He believed it was an important part of the inspiration that is drawn from women and his instinctive reverence for them was such that his hand went involuntarily to his hat on meeting the poorest of old beggar women in the street. Of one of his closest women friends, Mrs. Kennedy Tod, he frankly said, "She would make a good mayor of New York." The question of suffrage for women did not become a burning issue until after his death, but he believed in the suffrage for them on the grounds of justice and freedom.

No estimate would be complete or true that did not include the mystical side of his nature which was inborn and which his varied experiences of life greatly deepened and developed. The unseen world seemed always open to him and his point of view of everything included the great circle of Eternity of which this life is only a part. The background of his mind, to the one or two who knew him most intimately seemed half Fairyland, half Heaven, and it was the influence of this region of pure Spirit that touches his work with such beauty and gave his words and acts a rare and haunting quality, strangely moving to the heart and inspiring to ever more lofty effort those who had the grace to be open to his influence.

The great truths of the most universal religion, including its Christian development, seemed his intuitively, without instruction. The simple reverence and faith with which he would say of a friend who was suffering

hopelessly: "I hope God will take him soon. It will be so happy for him Up There,"— carried conviction to others, and he seemed to follow the souls of those he loved into the other world. Through every change and distraction of life, he prayed, and at such times seemed to travel far away from this world.

No one ever praised Life more. Many of his letters are like hymns or songs of joy. In his happy moments, like Emerson's Poet,

> "His feet were shod with golden bells
> And for him nature worked her miracles."

He said once that the "critical attitude was the cheapest one in the world, and that there was always Beauty even if it were hidden."

The last three years of his life, Munn and his wife passed their winters in their studio apartment in 57th Street in New York—an ample and somewhat picturesque background, where, surrounded by pictures and books and music, they passed happy days. During January of 1906 the beginning of an attack of nervous excitability showed itself in him, and they left New York, traveling and remaining in the country until the following autumn, when he seemed so restored to his normal health that they returned to their home.

He continued to seem so well that the hope of his wife in his restoration to permanent health again returned. They took up their usual life and several weeks followed full of a serenity and joy that had in it no hint of the coming shadow. One of his oldest and closest friends, Johnston Forbes-Robertson, was in town and they had

many happy meetings, one of which was in the Fifty-seventh Street Studio, where a group of twenty or thirty friends were assembled for informal talk and music. It is pleasant to remember him so near the end of his life in the companionship of one who is associated with the strong and happy days of his artistic work, and his wife was struck by the serene and joyous expression of his face on that afternoon. Several weeks of seeming health followed, but with the coming of the new year, January, 1907, signs of nervous depression began to show themselves and his strength failed rapidly. Some one who saw him frequently during this year spoke of him as "that broken-winged eagle." With the exception of one poignant expression of regret, he met these depressing conditions with the uncomplaining patience which is one of the highest forms of heroism, and never flagged in a sin-

gle external observance of his daily life, up to the very end, which came instantaneously from heart failure early in the morning of February tenth.

The afternoon before his death, he had walked in Central Park. The ground was covered with snow, the day clear and sunny. The cloud that had shadowed his spirit suddenly lifted, and when he returned to his wife, who had been prevented by a cold from going with him, he was filled with joy and spoke of the glorious sunlight and the happy people he had seen. "It was all so gay and beautiful," he said.

Her hope in his recovery returned, only to be taken away forever for this life the following morning.

He had more than once said in his letters, "I like sudden goings away. No time for sad farewells and regrets," and at the end his wish was fulfilled.

He was really known to but few, but by those few he was recognized as one of the sons of Strength and Light of whom the world is scarcely worthy and who leave behind them works of Truth and lasting Beauty to light the pilgrimage of those who remain and those who are to come.

Of him Browning's words might have been written:

One who never turned his back but
marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would
break,
Never dreamed, though right were
worsted, wrong would tri-
umph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to
fight better,
Sleep to wake.

ART NOTES

On the margins of the sketch-books of George Munn were jotted in faint pencilings his impressions and convictions about art, which were continually in the background of his mind, and the pages which follow have been selected from those in the sketch books.

LONDON, 1876

IF the National Art of England be not a burning question,—what in the name of Greece and Italy is? Does not the true greatness of these double blessed and mother countries in art consist of what their sons did as Sculptors, Painters and Poets,—and do not their works point like Cathedral spires to Heaven, and "rise in our hearts and to our eyes in thinking of the days that are no more"? The great master, History, teaches us what these kindred Arts did for the world and such jewels as are set in the great galleries of Europe are landmarks and lamps to guide our future in all that makes a people truly great.

"I am wrapt in a most humorous sadness."

Painting has become lighter food than it once was, in the good old times when Painters did glowing shrine-paintings—helps to prayer and noble thought and deed. We have changed all that and now a good subject is one that tells some pretty story for a pretty people. Even men who were shining lights in the Germ movement now paint dressed-up dolls doing nothing and meaning less,—devoid of any higher aim than to be sold to some rich perverter of the public taste.

But the great Masters are not all dead—we still have

Watts	Thompson
Stevens	Rajou
Ribot	Sargent
Whistler	Fortuny
Henner	Corot
Dannat	Millet
Walker	Mason

I think the ideal must mean to most of us, Nature glorified. Something in fine, ulterior to nature, better truly, but touched by Art. A lesson in Beauty founded upon the Real and reconstructed by the light of Divine Laws.

Mr. Whistler, I cannot speak of without emotion. He is saying things with his subtle brush, which few seem to really read —but Time will wreathe him with Laurel from the tree which gave Velasquez a crown. 1873.

The flowers in Art—those of beauty and perfume—immortal lilies—are very rare and one must, like the Swiss climbers, work hard indeed to reach them—the real Edelweiss bloom. They only grow in pure, rarefied air, but what fatigue and trouble or even risk of life itself is too much to pluck them for the world below?

Nothing can be more dangerous for the fame of a professor of the Fine Arts than to permit (if he can possibly prevent it) the character of a mannerist to be attached to him, or that he should be supposed capable of success only in a particular and limited style. The public are, in general, very ready to adopt the opinion that he who has pleased them in one peculiar mode of composition, is, by means of that very talent, rendered incapable of venturing upon other subjects. The effect of this disinclination on the part of the public towards the artificers of their pleasures, when they attempt to enlarge their means of amusing, may be seen in the criticism too frequently passed upon Actors or Artists who venture to change the character of their efforts, that in so doing they may enlarge the scale of their Art.

Disappointment whets our appetite for the

better time when the hand will work with the eyes and brain. The great Artist-painter possesses a divine life and strength like steel to triumph over every difficulty—and what living, glorious lessons for all time have been the life-long battles of some of them with their unappreciative and be-fooled public. A man of genius is like a musical instrument, it must be guided and touched by loving hands or it will be mute. None shall know of all the silent music longing to be free.

No one dislikes the commonplace or trite saying more than the true Artist, but in writing from experience one must go over well-known paths and deep ruts to teach truisms. Else why write? Now what the beginner does not know and the Master seems to recognize and work with a masterly knowledge of, is, that painting is nature treated with a full understanding that a reproduction is impos-

sible, and he who compromises the best is the greatest Artist-painter. Now in English, the expression Artist-painter is an unknown term. We say artist or painter, but in France they link the two words, and to many people it has a beautiful significance. It means, I believe, the perfect marriage of the artistic power with the skill of a sound technical mastery over the material and the *way* to paint. Now to illustrate this—Alfred Stevens is a great Artist-painter. Frederick Walker a great artist but with, comparatively speaking, little painting power; that is to say, his artistic feeling and poetry were far in advance of the practical skill to paint, both in his nature and training.

Velasquez was a perfect artist and painter. So in our time is Whistler. Rossetti was a bad painter but a very great artist and poet. To be truly a great painter in its best

and completest sense one must possess the two qualities. There are as many artists in the profession in England in proportion to the number as there are in any country, France not excepted. But the French lead the world to-day in national splendor of painting in all its phases and they too have been blessed in possessing real painter-poets. The French Millet was a marvelous poet in Art, but no great painter. Corot had the two qualities which go to make up the genius. But the Art student can make a list for himself if he understands clearly what is meant by artist-painter and can distinguish the one from the other. He must, of course, know what good technical painting is, and what endows a picture with poetic sentiment.

Art is a sealed and locked book with a thousand golden keys—when one is found that fits and will open, the world is the better for the discovery.

Men often hug their vices when their power to enjoy them is gone. Why do these men (R. A.'s) cling to their pride of Place so long before resigning in favor of—possibly other men just as bad—but still new names would be a boon to the critic at least!

At the moment, 1885, there is no Academician who is doing fine color. Millais has lost all sense of it and the use of sable brushes and the extent to which he seems to use them would damn any free or really noble color.

Watts is past his prime.

Orchardson is a good colorist in a certain way, a good colorist of the Scotch school! But color is of no school or period. Is it? We want a better sense of gray in a woman's cheek than a streak of Prussian or Antwerp blue? These remarks apply to Mr. Pettie,

too—another "Scotch" colorist! Mr. Holl is now a marvelous machine—turns out almost really noble work like a Photographer.

But money is the thing, and if a fund could be started to keep good men in the Path of Virtue, I for one will send a noble cheque.—Holl is fine, fresh and always the same—no better, no worse, for which we must be duly grateful. Leighton is a great decorative artist (the highest walk in Art),—a graceful draughtsman—successful in composition,—the most perfect man for the great position his sterling merits have won for him. May Heaven bless him and permit him to lead us for many a long year to come!

Onlow has done some sound, fine work—but—well, I can't explain it all! Only look at the Philip IV at the National Gallery and all I want to say will dawn on the reader. I would rather not mention the rest of the forty R. A.'s. They need more lashing than

a weak (?) man like myself can afford to give. They are supposed to be in their prime!

We need not aim too carefully at Beauty. It is universal and exists in myriad forms. Hit but one, and fame is your reward. The young painter should from the first draw in color. Let him associate as much as possible with the young men of his profession. Let him get the fine flower of new ideas when he needs them, from them, and then go to the Old Masters for confirmation.

Do not try to climb the whole tree of Art as Michael Angelo did. Grasp one branch and never let it go till you are safely astride of it and then cling to it till its bark has grown over your hands and you are one with its life and growth.

Remember that the true artist does not

need a casket of jewels to make beautiful harmonies and contrasts of colors. Genius and even talent, can do all with the cheapest tube colors. Five in number—the primaries —red, blue, yellow, white and black, or a piece of charcoal, a bit of brown wrapping-paper, and his thumb. Black paint as used by Velasquez and Whistler is more beautiful in the effect it produces than a rainbow, or the jewel room in the Tower of London—as Art it is finer in tone than the sunlit Alps. Yet on the other hand, do not be afraid of color. The artist must first be drunk with color and line and gamble recklessly with both, trusting to experience and Providence for the result. The great masters of Tone seem to have suffered and struggled before its beauty was revealed to them.

Study your model, but do only what is necessary for beauty and expression. Do not make a dictionary of items. Never let

your picture know how serious your intention is. If your work discovers your profound interest it will, like a coy maid, throw every obstacle in your way and nothing will come of the wooing. Treat your motive slightly and when you get the upper hand press your suit with every energy in your power and then discovery is of no moment. You win with ease. For a portrait, an untaught, intelligent person is often the best critic of a likeness.

When working, lose your own identity, but assume that of no one else, however great, or however much you may admire him or his artistic methods. God has made nobles of some men in every art. An enthusiastic admiration and even worship of their genius is healthy for the soul, but in working listen to the still, small voice that speaks to you and follow its bidding whatever it may dictate. Do not work too much

with your hands, but constantly with your eyes. When you do work, do so with careful boldness and you will have the freshness and strength to win. All artists know how subtly beautiful the ugly can be but do not choose it often. The great French masters have worn this idea threadbare and they are not to be beaten in its execution. Remember always that a good subject is often a painter's ruin. Too much story is perdition. Leave that to the literary man and let him tell it in words as it should be told.

Work and exercise in the morning and attend to other duties and pleasures of life after three o'clock in the afternoon. What we call Beauty steals into our hearts and wants to live there. But it must be turned out, for the benefit of mankind.

Tell great truths with big brushes. Look at Nature largely. Attend the marriage of

gray tones and gray skies. Do not see a tree or a sky singly, but grasp the subtle harmony of the whole, like the union of two grand notes of music. One and indivisible—each beautiful in itself—and together poetry.

Take your Art seriously and pursue it unswervingly for its own sake. Too many friendly critics are more dangerous than strong drink. Let good work and success drive the smile from your lips, but take heed lest the heart grow sad, the fearfullest thing in life. Let love sweeten work and pleasure, and both become divine.

Nature is never Art—but a store-house filled with inexhaustible material for all the Arts—the wind sighing in the trees and rushing through the tall grass, have suggested sublime harmonies to the musician. The fierce battles of bird and beast have helped the conception and to add tragedy to

the actor's rendition of hate and anger; even the Art of love has learned much from the tenderness of all nature for its kind and offspring. The Greeks modeled their Elgin Marbles, and their faultless coins, from study of their Athletes and the beauty of their classic women; so with each and every Art—and always with an added beauty in proportion to the artist's power and poetry. First of all learn to observe Nature: or in simple speech to use your eyes, even in the dark,—for, shut or open, they still see as we see in dreams, or as Helen Keller sees with her so-called "sightless eyes"! Look at a face and see if the hair be straight, the eyes small or large in proportion to the face, the tip or angle of the pose of the head—if a short or long upper lip—if the expression be commonplace or poetic, if the mouth be firm or a weak one and all these things and more are to be observed in just one look of one second or sixty. Then take as long as you

choose to remember your observations. Until you grasp the meaning of this observing, remember drawing is useless and therefore impossible.

All Artists—real Artists—are brothers, and know the quality of any art at a glance: —that is to say, the Elgin Marbles are supreme for exactly the same reasons that the great musical compositions are supreme in that art—and the same applies to the great Velasquez pictures. The great Shakespeare plays, the Greek Tragedies (possibly the most profound dramatic productions ever written in any language), the Greek temples, Milton's "Paradise Lost," the Bible, Homer, Dante, etc. They are all alike—brothers or cousins, in that they are made by masters who worked in certain kindred laws known by the chosen.

The Throne of Art is a magnificent struc-

ture,—its columns,—Velasquez, Titian, Rembrandt, Tintoretto.

Emerson's "Errand from the muse to the poet concerning his Art"—its great teaching, its glorious insight, its splendid eloquence are a burning, living cry to all with even Talent to persist and do with might what God has put into their souls.

Painting to me means color, else why paint at all? But make the discovery early in your artistic life whether or no the gods have gifted you. If not, drop the brush, rainbow-tipped as it was meant to be,—and work in some other material: you may still be an artist.

Velasquez's n o b l e blacks—Fortuny's beautiful whites—strange that they were both from the country of bright and dazzling colors.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Chopin's Mazurka Op. 68, No. 1

IT'S all color music, and it delights a painter. I think I could paint a Mazurka, though it has been said by a critic that this form of music is for the common people, and the Polonaise for the swells!

Mix your petitions to God with your best work and never fear but that He will answer your prayer.

Love all men and you enter God's aristocracy.

Every true man derives true nobility from God. *He* chooses them.

Do a noble action and He will pluck a quill

from an Angel's wing, dip it in the milk of His divine kindness and run it through all the little sins.

Fear of the devil and poverty are the curses of most men's lives. Fight the first to a finish, and face the other with your best work.

Show me a real, natural criminal and his history will have lacked Love.

The Ideal is not so far away, or above us. Stretch up a bit, and it will meet you half way.

The ugly is sometimes beautiful and like music to the musician.

Even sketches are best shown in frames. The moon would be a silly thing without its sky.

One need not aim too carefully at Beauty and Fame—they are *big* things.

Wagner—He knew that there was a vast audience awaiting him with a thirst for intellectual music. He supplied the demand and we are no longer bored by trivial tunes and parodies of life on the opera stage.

Bernhardt without doubt possesses the best talent for the stage of any woman, barring Desclees, of our time. Her resources are endless and magnificent and—she knows the power of advertisement!

1870. (This was before the day of Duse!)

Sarasate is simply musical genius personified. He too is a master in its great sense, and God will certainly give him a violin for the Heavenly Choir.

Though I know nothing of his Art, yet my Art makes me see when he succeeds just as surely as if I were a master in music. You

know what I have always said, viz.: that all governing principles that make for beauty and distinction are the same in all the Arts.

To be really happy yourself you must have a passion for the happiness of others.

Don't prop things up, build them up.

What we want after all in a Doctor is confidence. It is not what he can do for us but what we can do for ourselves, believing in him.

Then this matter of taste. "Oh, I know what I like." Yes, and it's lucky for Birmingham and Manchester and the cut glass manufacturers and the diamond merchants that you do, and continue to think you do, for, if it were not so, they would perforce go to the wall and into bankruptcy in ten minutes and would have to go into some honest business, like insurance.

People clever in one direction do not do or say clever things on strange ground.

If, as some claim, the truly esthetic Poetic Art-life may be had at any price in America, why have our novelists not made it more of a background for their work and heroes? Why Europe so often?

Candles and lamps should be burned where all good pictures are hung, and no furnace heat. Gas is expensive and inartistic.

Kindness and courtesy are natural things to the truly great, the duffer needs them to ensure success.

It is quite compatible with genius to know where the hammer is, and to tub every morning.

Lose your identity while at work and look at the result with childlike eyes.

If you want to do a good likeness of a man, paint a stranger, not a man you know well.

Do not carve the capitals till the foundations are laid.

They (the Academicians) seem divorced from sense "and the reality of things."

Why don't they apply the test of color blindness to would-be painters, just as they do to army men and engine drivers?

The Iconoclast is not a reformer but is apt to be an artistic ass.

The Iconoclast smashes only the semblance of the real, his reach never gets at the ideal. It is too far above him.

Re-forming is all very well but is a vulgar idea, generally, for the new form is usually worse than the old.

They err who teach that he who star-gazes,

stumbles. Keep your eyes on the stars and never lower them, but walk carefully and an added sense will be given you to feel the pitfalls and briars in your path. All the diamonds are not in dung hills.

Should pathology in literature go hand and hand with Art? Ibsen, the master of this form of teaching, failed, and he had real power. Give me medical books undiluted with story or garnished with "Art"!

Poetry must never buckle down to "common" sense. If it does, it must tip her wings with golden light and sweeten the bitter pill.

Why does the Supreme Being, or the unseen Force, whatever that may be, present problems which cannot possibly, even with the aid of science, lead the investigation to a definite end?

We don't know what we believe till we talk or write or give expression in some way, to our inmost thoughts and convictions.

Why this urging one on for the securing of Eternal Life? This life is no less important, for if decently and holily lived Eternal Life follows.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATION. A FRAGMENT (1898)

"IN architecture alone man looks back upon the masterpieces of the past, not as points of departure, but as ultimate attainments. Content for his own part, if by recombining the elements and reproducing the forms of these monuments, he can win from an esoteric circle of archæologists their praise of reproducing some reflex of their impressiveness."—*Viollet le Duc.*

Many of us would, after acquiring the knowledge and taste to travel abroad and study the architectural glories there, become architects; but this very taste for, and love of the beauties of this wonderful art, come to us too late in life, and many men of artistic natures miss their vocation. Take any

town or city in America and examine the most costly buildings, and we find them almost invariably the most pretentious in detail and ornament, and without doubt the ugliest. It would seem that our architects had studied, nay, copied in many instances, the worst European models, when, had they been men of taste and educated in their art, they might have been inspired to follow the many examples of perfect art we find scattered so lavishly in every country in Europe. We seem possessed with the idea that the most expensive house in town is the most beautiful and worthy of admiration. The reverse is almost invariably the case. It takes a genius to spend a large sum worthily and with the best results. In many of our cities and country towns we find really beautiful houses of small cost, well built (but too often of wood), well and fittingly designed, and satisfactory to the dweller therein and the passer-by.

Simplicity in all forms of art is, and must be, forever "in style;" and so let not the possessor of anything good of its kind be perturbed in spirit over possessing a house or picture not in the prevailing style at the moment. If it be fine, in either or in all cases, it is in style eternally.

There is surely no more instructive, educational fad abroad, than that of æsthetic house decoration. I say educational, in its best and broadest sense, because it touches the rich man who can afford a beautiful interior to his house, it teaches his children, his friends, casual visitors and servants; for is it not through the eye that nearly all our best impressions are conveyed to our brain?

We have, but very slowly to be sure, begun a Renaissance of beautiful house decoration, which has flowered sturdily and seems, in the great majority of cases,

to be in the best hands, for have not such men as La Farge, Francis Lathrop, and a few others, all too few for this immense country, devoted their taste and best years to this endless and truly beautiful mode of personal expression, making our dwellings lovely to live in, harmonizing walls, ceilings, floors, furniture; transforming and giving the touch of distinction to the dwellers therein, and binding all the rooms together, either with subtle contrasts of color and form, or a complete harmony running through the whole house. This gives the fortunate inhabitants a curious satisfaction and sense of fitness, and is carried to the kitchen and third and fourth floors, where those who serve their master and mistress are noiselessly taught to understand some of Nature's harmonies repeated in all that goes to make up what we understand by the house decorator's art. This may be magnificent or sim-

ple,—and cheap also, if placed in the hands of a man of taste so far as actual money expended goes.

In either case what better way can we instruct our children than by bringing them up surrounded by distinction in this form of Art? It is just as easy to live with good form and color as with the terrible wall-papers and ghastly furniture of a quarter of a century ago. Nay, it should be easier, and once the demand is created by the best artist decorators, we shall be housed fittingly, and sweetness and light in our surroundings will prevail.

Nature teaches us the point I wish to insist on, in endless lessons and in endless variety! Break open an apple and see the lovely color and form of the housing of the seeds, open an oyster and you have his marvelous dwelling revealed, with his pearl exquisitely and fittingly sheltered. Only think of the deep brown

seeds in a melon; the bird in her nest, or, it may be, the merman and his maid in their opalescent, sea-washed grotto. They know naught of bad taste and machine-made furniture! They walk on a carpet of sea weeds, intricate and varied in form and dainty color; is not all about their Sea-House strangely beautiful and made appropriate by the Master Decorator who teaches the wise with a prodigality no man can estimate or utilize?

Mural painting should be revived, easel painting having cut it out, so to speak, in public estimation. The average modern architect shows a lamentable lack of education. It is a curious fact that the ultimate achievements of architecture and decoration are all of the past. Apropos of this, and for example, take the French cathedrals of the 13th century, notably, Notre Dame of Paris, Chartres, Bourges, Rouen, Amiens, Rheims, etc., and five hundred other cathedrals and

churches of that period all over Europe. Can we show anything modern, or of our time, comparable for one instant to the architectural and decorative splendors of such masterpieces? And again let us cite these marvels of domestic architecture. Can we show anything to compare with the Châteaux of Coney, Josselin, Pierrefonds, Chaumont and Chenonceau? Much, if not all, of what we now call the colonial style of architecture was built not by architects but by skilled English carpenters and, curiously enough, the ornamentation was of purely classic origin. These houses are beautiful, sober, fitting and picturesque.

What we call our American style of architecture, that is to say, those dwellings designed by a very small number of our best architects, are charming and creditable, but of course the domestic architecture of France is, in its variety and artistic splen-

dor, unrivaled. The Musician's house at Rheims, and Francis I's house on the Seine in Paris are beautiful examples.

THE DE CHAVANNES DECORATIONS

I

To the Editor of the *Transcript:*

In last Sunday's *Herald* a rather savage attack upon Puvis de Chavannes and his decorations in the Boston Public Library appeared, and as, in the opinion at least of many of the best painters of our time, these paintings do decorate a noble building, I feel that some protest should be made against this critic's dull criticism, which, coupled with the recent decision of the Art Commission that Mr. Macmonnies' Bacchante is unsuited [did they say unfit?] to adorn and eternally dance in the library's beautiful court, has, I must own, considerably startled me. Many of us who admire that statue and

these "bad" decorations in the Public Library are painters and sculptors, and truly love all that contributes to sweetness and light, to morals, and to the city beautiful, and so we feel that this art commission and the *Herald* art critic have blundered, and are, to put it mildly quite unfit to lead or guide public taste in art or morals in modern Athens.

I am unable to defend the statue or its generous, but, alas! mistaken donor, Mr. McKim, for I can see no indecency in what man copies from one of God's creations; but I can and do take issue with much, if not all, that this critic of the Chavannes paintings says regarding so much beauty, decorative beauty, mark you, as is contained in these panels by this great French painter. I grant that the drawing is faulty and the masses and details are, sometimes, distinctly not beautiful, not beautiful as Veronese, Tintoret, Velasquez (quaint as are some of

the Spanish skirt fashions) are beautiful, but surely lovely in color and tone, delightfully unconventional, fitting as decorations, suggestive of a beauty all too rare in modern art and just literary enough to make them go with the building and sing in harmony with its purpose.

These decorations are not as wonderful as those (by the same hand) in the Sorbonne and Pantheon in Paris, but they are nobly conceived, truly decorative, lovely in quality of tone and color, and fitting in every way to adorn a city's best building.

Let some more worthy painter than the writer of these lines keep this ball a-rolling; for the question, if such there be, as to the real merit of these decorations, is something of an art education in itself. In fine, art, since the best Greek period, has never been for the *hoi polloi* and no one expects these decorations to be a "nine days' wonder."

But give them more time, and surely our

children, and their children, more surely, will call us, or some of us, "men of taste," and the reasons will grow with them, and those reasons are written "large" on the wall a serious man climbs when he sets out on that long but never tiresome road that leads to a niche in the temple of knowledge and fame.

Why, then, are these panels good? They were made by a serious man; an artist long before he became "serious." They are the result of time, his time and that of the ages before him. No lightly accepted commission these, but Puvis de Chavannes made them after years, let us say fifty years, of work or experience, if you like, and surely he has given us his best, or nearly so.

A painter's reasons for his faith are these: First, they are appropriate and decorative. Second, they are serious and noble and fitting in conception. Third, it would be difficult to find a better man, better fitted by the test of time to fill the space so delicately

and in harmony with the severe building, and the severe Puritan who will rest before them and certainly criticise!

You, Mr. Editor, have grave duties, not only to "art," but to the public, else I might take up these panels one by one and show cause why one anonymous critic should not teach painters, at least, what is good or bad in a profession they have served with all their might, and counted not the cost.

II

To the Editor of the *Herald:*

In the *Herald* of Sunday, November 1, the art critic of that journal wrote what to many of us seemed a most inconsiderate notice of the panel decorations by Puvis de Chavannes, in the Boston Public Library. No one replying, I, a painter by profession, wrote a few words in defense of this masterly French decorator, and my letter was printed in the *Evening Transcript* of November 7th.

In the *Herald* of the 15th, the critic of the *Herald* takes notice (in the Fine Arts column) of my letter to the *Transcript,* in, what many men think, a rather unfair way.

It is to be remembered, both by the *Herald* art critic and myself, that we are discussing the work which is the ultimate word of a man whom the art world has proclaimed great in mural decoration. This should not restrain or limit the honesty or courage of our opinions, but it should at least impose on us the obligation to abstain from personalities and tricks of speech. If thirty years of hard work as an art student—we really never seem to progress further—be a qualification to speak on this subject of the Chavannes decorations, then I must be pardoned if I set down very briefly my convictions against those of this writer, published in the *Morning Herald* of November 1st.

There is much to be said in qualifying criticism of several of these decorations, but this

critic has not, pray observe, gone into particulars.

Well, Mr. Editor, we painters by study and profession see some nods by this Jove, and I will indicate a few at random. First, M. De Chavannes is guilty of some grave faults, the result, possibly, of carelessness or intentional naïveté, and I will endeavor to point them out, not, of course, in detail, or too carefully, but merely for those who can read, and run. To begin with (this, remember, is the reverse of the medal, and not its glorious side, which wholly escapes this critic's notice!), some of the drawing is faulty and certain of the silhouettes of the various forms are certainly open to criticism. I will, with rigid briefness, explain this a little for the laymen and our "critic," and will take at random Raffaello Sanzio's portrait of Jeanne d'Arragon in the Louvre. In this picture we have a truly noble work of art, like the Parthenon marbles in qual-

ity, every form contained in it essentially beautiful; not only beautiful when seen as hung in the Louvre, but even a photograph of it placed upside down on the easel, or sideways, shows marvels of form. The sleeves and the slashings in the sleeves, the disposition of all the forms, the lights and shadows and their shapes, even if the picture be turned so that it rests on either of its four sides, display a superb ensemble, and a wonderful series of lovely forms, each perfect, literally lovely shapes in themselves, regardless of the painting as a whole. Well, does Puvis de Chavannes rival such faultless work? Alas! no; for this is the nineteenth century, and we are not given to overmuch thought in such matters, mere details to us, but vital problems to the Greek and Italian masters and giants. Now let us turn to the merits of these beautiful panels, and to Puvis de Chavannes' justly won laurels. Why does our Boston "critic" not mention them?

The beauties are many and sound; I mean sound and living for all time.

There is no dark in them as biting as the blacks in the marble of the staircase; thus they are delicate, flat decorations, framed by the gold and black marble. They are not pictures in the ordinary meaning of the word; they are lovely arrangements of color, inviting, not demanding, the attention of those who mount the stairs presumably on serious business or study.

Surely no chart or detailed elucidation is needed to describe these beautiful panels, and I hope it will not be deemed necessary by those in authority to print and circulate anything of the kind. These decorations, and, pardon me if I insist a little on this point, are not pictures, conventional pictures, with a story and sometimes, alas! a strong literary flavor (better, generally, than the paintermanship that is used to elucidate them), but flat, almost shadowless arrange-

ments of color masses, done with the big decorator's mind perfectly clear as to their fitness and place in one immense architectural scheme. And so let us realize that of the more important decorations in the library those by Puvis de Chavannes and John Sargent alone are fitting and in the proper spirit. But surely no more need be said on a subject so well understood by serious men, backed as they are, by all the great men of the past who were painter-decorators. The late Lord Leighton, P. R. A., once said to me: "Never forget that the best decorative art is the grandest and noblest art in all the world, but it has its limitations in certain ways, and when those are disregarded it becomes foolish and vulgar, and at once is beloved by the Philistine and the thoughtless."

One point I wish to mention here, and possibly some painter or architect may be able to answer it and enlighten me, viz.:

Is the art of fresco painting so wholly lost that perforce these panels by De Chavannes, Sargent and others must needs be done on canvas and glued to the walls, and not done, as of old, in the plaster? We all know of the melancholy condition of the Hunt mural decorations in the Capitol at Albany, but has no one, except the ordinary house decorator, learned the secret of direct painting on the plaster?

If these men would not come to Boston and paint on the walls, then, in my opinion, it would have been better and more expedient to have given native men the chance and glory of trying, at least.

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, in advance for your courtesy, and asking your pardon and indulgence for the time I have taken, I am your obliged servant,

GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN.

REPRODUCTIONS OF THE PAINTINGS OF GEORGE FREDERICK MUNN



MEADOWSWEET



A GRAY DAY



ON THE KENNET



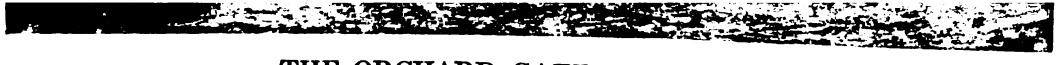
ARCADIA

DAISY FIELDS, EVENING

THE CHÂTEAU DE CRIVE CEAUX



THE OLD CHURCH, VILLERVILLE



THE ORCHARD GATE (BRITTANY)

THE DESERTED CHÂTEAU

FORT OF LA HOGUE

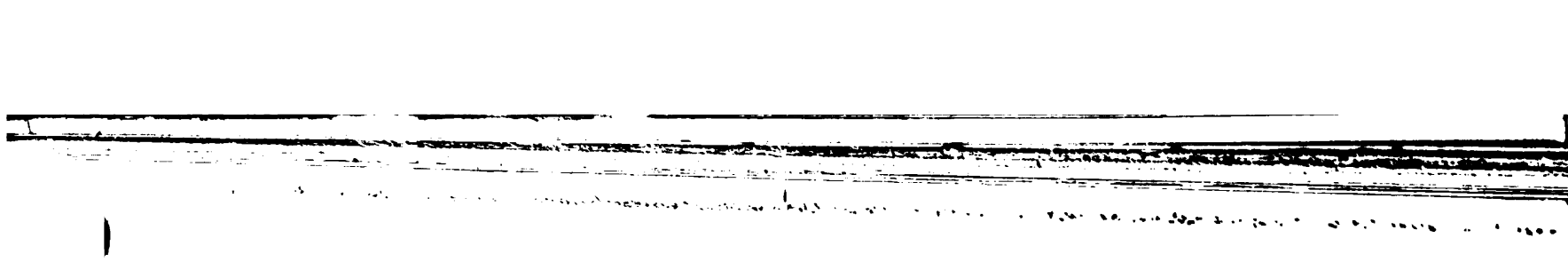
THE BRETON QUARRY-WORKERS



BRITTANY









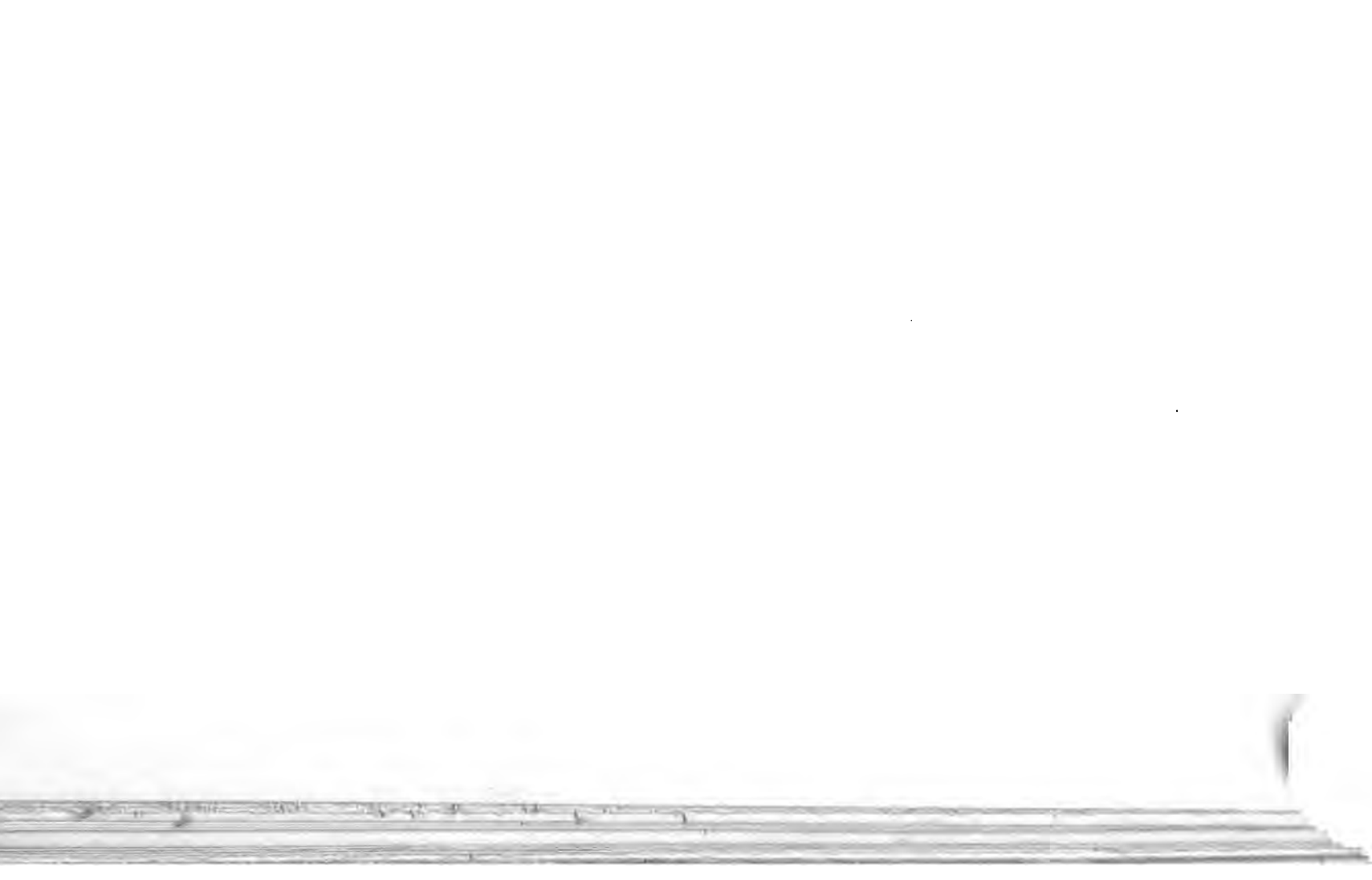




















Roses: Dudley Gall
Wildflowers: Dudley
1876 **A Sunny Day.** Pont-
Flowers. Sold to Lac
1877 **A Brittany Model** ((
Society of British A
Wallflowers. Exhibite
emy, owned by Y.
Esher, Surrey.
1878 **A Gray Day, Brittany.**
Academy, owned by
Booth Street, Bradfo
A Reconnaissance. E
Academy, owned by I
more, Md.
Art Needlework. Exhib
Lost and Awfully Frighte
Moonlight.
Sunlight, Brittany. Ex
Academy.
1879 **Breton Quarrymakers.** E
Academy, owned by Y
Buttons, South Kensing
Cornish Trawlers at Re
Dudley Gallery. Sold
& Sons, Manchester, En
Radishes. Exhibited at
Academy, Dublin.

[2] Book typewritten.

1880 **A Berkshire Idyll.** Exhibited at Society of British Artists.

The Back Door. Leeds Spring Exhibition, owned by Professor Marshall, M.A., Leeds, exhibited at Dudley Gallery; owned by Y. H. Tonlinson, Esq.[3]

1881 **Amusing His Lordship.**

Art is Long and Time is Fleeting, etc. Exhibited at Royal Academy. Sold to Y. H. Tonlinson, Esq., Huddersfield.

An Old Master.[4] Walker Art Gallery. Owned by Henry Duncan, 7 Belvidere Road, Prince's Park, Liverpool.

[3] Letter W. A. Duncan. [4] The subject of the picture is well chosen. It depicts an artist of venerable aspect, such as one would imagine Watts or Titian to have been in extreme age. Wearing a skull cap from which streams out an abundance of white hair, circling a head of much distinction, the old master, clad in a long robe with a broad sable collar, sits in the growing feebleness of age in an ample armchair of solid make with great spiral legs and cross supports beneath. The old man is giving the finishing touches to what he evidently contemplates as likely to be the final product of his art, an Andromeda chained to the rock. The picture, already framed, stands upon a solid easel of plain oak, and within reach of the artist stands a large vase filled with paint brushes. A screen is fixed behind the artist to protect the old man from draughts, and to the right of the spectator is another armchair upholstered in green placed against the wall of the studio and above the chair hangs a picture, while various portfolios containing studies lie here and there about the room.

Arcadia. Owned by W. D. Hall, Brightside, Little King's Hill, Great Missenden, Bucks.

1882 **Between Sunlight and Moonlight.** Exhibited at Grosvenor Gallery; sold to A. B. Winterbotham, Norman Hill, Purnley, Gloucestershire.[5]

(19 x 13.)

Landscape. Exhibited at Royal Academy.[6]

Moonrise. Owned by Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson.

Six Venetian Pictures.

One Joyous little Landscape. Owned in London, England.

Pumpkins, South of France. Exhibited at Royal Academy.

"The World is Changed

The Sun's away," etc. (R. Browning.)

Owned by C. H. Rickards, Esq., Old Trafford, Manchester.

The First Snow. Exhibited at Royal Academy.

Low Tide, Normandy: The Walls of La Hogue. Autumn sketch. Owned by Y. H. Tonlinson, Esq.

The Little Gleaner. Owned by Y. H. Tonlinson, Esq., Union Bank, Huddersfield.

[5] Letter H. Hogue.

[6] It represents an Old Farm by a pool and there is an avenue of trees to the right at right angles to the buildings. A crescent moon is rising in the background above the farm.

1883 **Passing Showers.** Exhibited at Grosvenor Gallery.

"**The Wild March winds are blowing,**" etc. Exhibited at Royal Academy.

1884 **The Story of the Church.** Exhibited at the Royal Academy.

1885 **A Tale of Woe.**

Cornish Trawlers. Sold to Mr. Holt, Sudley, Mossley Hill, Liverpool.

In Chancery. Exhibited at Grosvenor Gallery. Owned by Hon. Stephen Coleridge, 7 Egerton Mansions, South Kensington, S. W.

In the Hayfield. Exhibited at Grosvenor Gallery; owned by Mr. W. D. Hall, Brightside, Little King's Hill, Great Missenden, Bucks.

Portrait of a Lady (M. C.). Destroyed.

The Culprit.

The Enchanted City. Owned by Miss Elizabeth Bartol, Chestnut Street, Boston.

1885 **Walls of La Hogue.** Exhibited at Dudley Gallery.

1886 **On the Kennett.**[7] Exhibited at Royal Academy.

reflecting the latter and trees in the pool which occupies the whole of the foreground.

[7] The *Saturday Review* pronounced this to be the finest ex-

1892 **Rhode Island Idyll** (
Pine Trees and Sa
1881–2 in Manchest
("His best work."
Country Scene. Trees
ground; River witl
strong shadows. C
Bell, Cavendish Roa
Breton Peasants pushin
Blocks of Stone. C
Gray, 14 The Boltons
London. Bought late
Brattleboro, Vt.
Bretagne. Exhibited at
L'Hovir San Rafael. E
Paris.
Country Road in Autum
Henry C. Baldwin, 1
Ave., Boston.

OWNED BY MARGARET

Brittany
Normandy—After Sunset } large
Normandy Haycocks—Sunset
Seven Little Trees.
Old Church, Normandy.

ample of a solid and serious style in the
The Royal Academy of that year.

Old Fish Pools, Woolhampton.
Storm, Annisquam.
The River, Annisquam.
River and Meadows, Annisquam.
Old Post Office, Woolhampton.
Old Breton Wood Shed.
Vase and Roses.
An Old Violin. Sketch.
An Eastern Seaport.
Venice. Very small painting—very fine.
Two very small and beautiful landscapes—Trees and Meadows.
Meadow and Stream.
London Bridge—Sunset.
Several Unfinished Sketches.

OWNED BY J. KENNEDY TOD

Moonlight. Very beautiful.

OWNED BY ROSS WINANS OF BALTIMORE

Old Breton Stable Yard.

OWNED BY MRS. WINCHESTER DONALD

An American Beauty Rose.

OWNED BY MRS. GARRETT R. PIER, OF NEW YORK

Head of Old Man. (ETCHING)

PAINTE

Copy of three men from a
Head and shoulders of eac
Normandy Landscape.
Corner of Munkacsy's studio.
Japanese Bowl and Flowers.
Small Japanese Bowl and Pa
Normandy Peasant Girl.
Normandy Peasant before a S
The Deserted Farm.
Girl by the Sea.
Copy of the figure of the Ma
me Tangere."
Normandy Church (with chil

OWNED BY MRS. J. M. C

1. **Breton Wash House.**
2. **The Fort of La Hogue.**
3. **Evening** (Crescent moon
4. **Fruits.** Still life.
5. **Twilight.**



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